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ABSTRACT

A study investigated instructional administrative practices in workplace English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) programs and lessons learned in their implementation, with special attention given to innovative practice and its context. Data were drawn from a survey of 22 workplace literacy programs with culturally diverse populations in a variety of industries in Illinois and Indiana, and from four in-depth program examinations. Program aspects studied include: goals; adjustments for multi-ethnic populations; philosophical or practical orientation; educational strategies; teaching methods; approach to cultural issues; teacher and volunteer staffing; teacher and volunteer training; needs analysis; program evaluation; student identification and recruitment; outreach efforts; and support services. Results are summarized in these areas: curriculum goals; program history; hours; instructional providers; union involvement; program origins; financial support; participant recruitment and selection; support services; need analysis, assessment, and evaluation; obstacles to program success; key features of effective programs; trainer recruitment and selection; teaching approaches and methods; program design and populations served; program orientations; potential contradictions or conflicts; model program design; and implications for practice. Appended materials include information related to site selection and survey. Contains 121 references. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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ED 406 865

A CLOSE EXAMINATION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES OF ESL WORKPLACE LITERACY PROGRAMS IN THE MIDWEST

GLADYS BRIGNONI

Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy
in the School of Education
Indiana University

August 1996

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of Problem

Adult literacy became a national issue in the United States during the 1980's (Abella, 1986; Chisman & Associates, 1990; Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1988, 1989, 1990; U.S. Departments of Labor and Education, 1988). The literacy discussion has expanded to a general discussion of basic skills including difficulty in reading, writing, or performing simple mathematical computations (Newman & Beverstock, 1990). As American businesses continued to face a workforce with inadequate literacy skills, the field of workplace literacy emerged with an increase in workplace literacy programs offered by businesses. However, the capacity of programs to enhance workers' skills and knowledge has become more challenging, especially as English as a Second Language (ESL) employees enter the workforce. Many businesses have trained English speaking employees in job skills but few are experienced in providing training for ESL workers (Thomas et al., 1991).

Industries' Challenges

Some employers contend that the United States is losing its competitive edge because American workers lack the educational background and job skills necessary to compete in a global economy. This is illustrated in the following example:

> Anyone who has hired new employees or tried to retrain veteran ones is painfully aware of the problem. As much as a quarter of the American labor force - anywhere from 20 million to 27 million adults - lacks the basic reading, writing, and math skills necessary to perform in today's increasingly complex job market. One out of every 4 drops out of high school, and of those who graduate, 1 out of every 4 has the equivalent of an eighth-grade education. How will they write, or even read, complicated production memos for robotized assembly lines? (Gorman, 1988, p.56)

Estimates of the costs of low level literacy to the state, the federal government, and industries in the United States are imprecise. However, we can get a general sense for these expenses by examining a study by the Canadian Business Task Force on Literacy. In 1988 it estimated the cost of low literacy to Canada by using the following categories: industrial accidents, lost productivity, direct training costs, lost earnings, unemployment expenses, and the cost of operating federal prisons. The Task Force determined that Canadian business loses $4 billion or more every year and that the cost to Canadian society as a whole is approximately $10 billion per year (Canadian Business

Task Force on Literacy, 1993). Since the United States' population is nine times that of Canada, Beverstock, Bhola and Newman (1993) concede that these figures would most likely be proportionately higher in this country.

Studies of the basic skills in the American workplace have reported numerous instances of the high cost of functional illiteracy to industries (Thomas, 1989). The term "functional illiteracy" is used to refer to the difficulties encountered by people when they are not literate enough to work in increasingly technological industries (Beverstock et al., 1993). One instance of the high cost of illiteracy was illustrated by the U.S. Department of Labor in 1988 as it investigated the economy in eight Southeastern states. The Department estimated that there were about 12.1 million functionally illiterate adults. This is estimated to cost the Southeast economy almost $57.2 billion per year in lost business, productivity, unrealized tax revenues, welfare costs, and expenses associated with crime and related social problems (U.S. Department of Labor, 1988; Mendel, 1988).

Despite the publicized literacy problems among workers, most companies do not have in-house programs aimed at addressing this issue. In 1989 the American Society for Training and Development conducted a survey of 20,000 United States businesses with more than 100 employees. The results demonstrate that more than $44.4 billion were spent for training. Surprisingly, less than 10 percent of these funds were used for basic education. The report indicates that 22 percent of the companies with 100 to 499 employees sponsored remedial or basic education, such as reading, writing, or arithmetic training in contrast to 24 percent of the companies with 500 to 999 employees. Unexpectedly, this figure decreases to 19 percent for companies with 1,000 to 2,499 employees and increases to 35 percent for companies with 2,500 or more employees (Moore, 1992).

While these results are informative, they lack significant precision with regard to the number and characteristics of program participants. For instance: Did the majority of these workers have a high school diploma? Were these workers considered functionally illiterate? What percentage of the ESL learners were illiterate in their native language? What type of training was offered to the ESL population?

Need for Basic Skills Improvement

In 1990 Mishel & Teixeira closely examined the data provided by the report Workforce 2000: Work and workers for the twenty-first century, which projected a labor shortage. Mishel & Teixeira determined that skills shortages rather than job shortages would become the prevalent labor problem encountered by employers as there are not enough adults achieving the skills that will be required for world markets in the year 2000 (1990; Eurich, 1985; 1990). There is a need for higher levels of basic skills in reading, writing, and computation in the workforce due to technological innovations and productivity growth (Mishel & Teixeira, 1990). As the economy demands more technical sophistication of its workers and these workers are not prepared, adults' job security will be unstable (Carnevale, 1990). The following example illustrates the increasingly visible problems resulting from an underskilled workforce:

> In 1987 the New York Telephone Company reported that, in order to find 2,100 employees with adequate skills (minimum standards for vocabulary, number relationships, and problem solving) for the positions of telephone operator and repair technician, it had to test 57,000 applicants (O'Neil, 1989).

Employers are starting to realize that minorities, including refugees, immigrants and native born non-English speaking persons, will make up an increasingly large share of the workforce over the next decade. In 1987, the U.S. Department of Labor predicted that between the years 1990 and 2000, immigrants would comprise the largest share of the increase in our nation's population and the workforce since World War I. By the year 2005, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates the sharpest rise in the workforce to be among Hispanics, exhibiting a growth from 7.7 percent of the workforce in 1990 to 11.1 percent by 2005 (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1991). Parallel increases exist for Asians and other minorities who are expected to grow from 3.1 percent of the U.S. population in 1990 to 4.3 percent of the U.S. population by 2005 (Maynard, 1993).

The United States government reported in 1992 that it issued 700,000 visas to immigrant workers, up from 500,000 in 1991 (Ramsey & Robyn, 1992). Thirty-seven percent of immigrants over the age of 20 have less than a high school education. With these new populations in the workplace, companies are becoming aware of training needs for employment and effective job performance. This is especially true for second language (ESL) workers.

Demographic statistics in the state of Illinois indicate that the need for workplace English as a second language instruction will increase because the Latino population in Chicago increased by 29% between 1980 and 1990 (Latino Institute Research, April 1991). Twenty-three percent of Chicago households reported that they spoke a language other than English at home (1990 Census of Population and Housing Summary Tape, File 3A). Subsequently, Hispanics account for 40% of the growth of the working age population, the largest of any group in Illinois (Illinois Dept. of Employment Security, p.15).

In addition to language and literacy instruction, some scholars suggest that foreign workers need training in American working culture and in the culture of their particular workplace (Thomas et al., 1991; Solomon, 1993). This cultural training needs to be an integral part of English language and literacy training. Although there is not enough available research, many educators claim that through cross-cultural training, ESL employees will become aware of employers' expectations of workers; be able to analyze interpersonal relations on the job; and develop critical thinking skills (Thomas et al., 1991). By achieving competence in these areas, ESL employees will enhance their capability to be trained for job upgrades and promotions.

It is common to encounter adult training programs which lack this cultural component. In 1990, Martin discerned that many adult literacy programs are culturally insensitive. He investigated ethnic groups' educational attainment levels, the functional literacy levels and rates of participation in the data provided by a sample of adult literacy programs during the years 1977-1978 and 1988-1989. Martin contends that information from these programs suggests they present barriers to minorities when they ignore the social-structural forces that shape the social context and negative life experiences of many ESL students. Martin asserts that minorities require culturally sensitive learning environments that present opportunities to critically reflect on and to transform both the social-structural forces that affect their own personal lives and perspectives that could lead to an uncritical acceptance of *cultural inversion*[1] (1990).

Workplace Literacy

Attention to adult literacy skills has expanded to spread focus upon workplace literacy or the workplace literacy movement. Before discussing this new focus, let us first attempt to define it. A variety of terms have been used in the adult literature to refer to this movement: "worker education," "basic or remedial education" (American Association for Adult and Continuing Education); "adult literacy," "employee basic skills," "job-related basic skills" (Business Council for Effective Literacy); "workforce education," "workforce literacy" (Adult Education and Literacy Section, Illinois State Board of Education); "workplace literacy" (National Alliance of Business); and "industry-based education" (National Center for Research in Vocational Education, Ohio State University).

For this study the researcher will choose "workplace literacy" as it indicates succinctly the instructional setting and type of instruction. Moreover, this term seems to be most appropriate because the other terms appear too general ("adult literacy," "worker education") or too specific ("job-related basic skills").

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[1] Based on Ogbu's (1990) hypothesis that involuntary minorities resist cultural assimilation by practicing a form of behavior, events and symbols that inform a social identity opposed to the social identity of White Americans.

The AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations) Education Department (1990) suggests the following definition for "workplace literacy" in Worker-Centered Learning: A Union Guide to Workplace Literacy:

> Workplace literacy is more than just knowing how to read. It's also more than having the narrow skills for a specific job. When we use the term "literacy" we include the full array of basic skills that enable an individual to "use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential (Sarmiento & Kay, 1990, p.3).

Furthermore, workplace literacy is envisioned as a benefit to both native speakers and nonnative speakers of English (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1985). In addition, emphasis on developing cultural competency along with linguistic competency may be an essential program goal for ESL learners in workplace literacy programs. As Kremer points out: "Although language and culture are virtually inseparable, it is important to recognize the significance of cultural attributes" (1984). Some ESL learners may have a good command of the language but little ability to communicate. These communication difficulties may be attributed to unsuitable gestures, inappropriate question or an apparently brusque reply to a question which are likely to be traced to cultural differences. Moreover, Kremer claims that a training program should teach cross-cultural skills that are pertinent to the workplace. The possible areas covered in teaching cultural competency may include such elements as arriving at work on time, calling in sick, understanding work schedules, time sheets, paychecks and deductions, benefits, employee forms, safety rules, and labor unions.

Only a handful of the hundreds of published workplace literacy program descriptions include and address the ESL population. Still fewer mention the need to incorporate the social and cultural aspects of the workplace environment into ESL training. No program report systematically specifies the needed language functions of the ESL population in the workplace.

Most of the existing ESL workplace literacy programs have been designed to address a particular ethnic or language population. For example, programs in the Southwest tend to address Hispanics, whereas in the Pacific west, they address Asians. A different challenge encountered in many regions of the country is the growth of a small but very diverse ESL population. This is especially experienced in the Midwest where adult educators need to consider ways to accommodate the various cultural perspectives of multi-ethnic literacy students when designing ESL workplace literacy programs.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the instructional and administrative practices (key components of effective[2] programs) as well as lessons learned from ESL workplace literacy programs which address a broad range of ethnic and cultural issues such as those found in the Midwest. A particular emphasis will be placed on learning and documenting the innovative practices at various sites and the contexts in which they occurred. This information will help practitioners to implement and improve program effectiveness for ESL learners with limited literacy skills. The areas that will be addressed include[3]:

- types of partnerships providing workplace literacy services (community adult basic education, business, university or community college);

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[2] In order for a workplace literacy program to be recognized as being "effective" it must meet one or more of the following criteria: national recognition by the National Workplace Literacy Program; awards won for outstanding literacy programs; successful outcomes; best participation and/or retention rates; longest running program; renewed state and/or federal funding.

[3] Topics are based on a 1991 survey of nationwide workplace literacy project directors' priority interests; conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education. For further reference refer to Workplace education: Voices from the field.

- organizational principles;
- learning program issues, including staff development and management, recruitment, assessment, and curriculum development (content and methodologies of the programs);
- evaluation methods.

There are two research goals which will be addressed in this study by the following broad inquiry questions.

Goals

Some ESL workplace literacy programs, such as those found in the Midwest, serve several different language and cultural groups rather than a single predominant language group (i.e., Hispanics). The first goal of this study is:

GOAL 1 - ***To describe to adult basic educators and program directors the administrative and instructional practices as well as lessons learned from these Midwestern ESL workplace literacy programs.***

The data for this goal will be based on a survey of 22 ESL workplace literacy programs followed by four in-depth program examinations. The following questions based on eight key program components of adult ESL programs (identified by Wrigley and Guth in the literature research) will be used to address this goal:

Program Development

Curriculum Goals:

1. What are the goals of ESL workplace literacy programs?

Program Design:

2. What special adjustments are performed in the program when the ESL population is multi-ethnic?
3. What is the underlying philosophical orientation of the program? (i.e., development of basic literacy skills, cultural knowledge, English for specific purposes)

Approaches and Methods:

4. What teaching approaches are used in ESL workplace literacy programs? (i.e., communicative approach, grammar-translation, whole language)
5. What teaching methods are utilized in ESL workplace literacy programs? (i.e., role-plays, worksheets, whole language)
6. How are cultural issues addressed in ESL workplace literacy programs?

Staff Development:

7. How do ESL workplace literacy programs staff teachers and volunteers?

8. How do ESL workplace literacy programs train teachers and volunteers?

Assessment and Evaluation

Initial Assessment and Progress Evaluation:

9. What type of needs assessment and literacy task analyses are conducted prior to the development of the curriculum?
10. How are the ESL workplace literacy program's outcomes evaluated?
11. How do the programs identify workers eligible for ESL instruction? (i.e., supervisors identify workers)

Broad Community Support

Community Outreach:

12. What types of relationships exist between the educational service providers (from outside the business) and representatives from business, labor union or joint union-management?

Support Systems:

13. What instructional and support services are offered?
14. How are participants recruited?

A second goal which will be addressed is:

GOAL 2 - ***To refine and further develop the framework suggested by the research literature for examining***

ESL workplace literacy programs. (See pp.19-49).

1. How do ESL workplace literacy programs reflect the various definitions of adult ESL literacy? (See pp.33-35).
2. To what degree do ESL workplace literacy programs reflect the distinct features of adult ESL populations as outlined by the Ad Hoc Policy Group? (See pp.36-39).
3. To what degree are the components and orientations of effective adult ESL programs identified by Wrigley and Guth reflected in ESL workplace literacy programs? (See pp.39-47).
4. To what degree are the attributes of effective workplace literacy programs identified by the National Workplace Literacy Program at the U.S. Department of Education reflected in ESL workplace literacy programs? (See pp.20-23).

Significance of Study

Although there is a relatively small percentage of ESL population in the Midwest, this populace is currently growing. Illinois is regarded as one of six states with at least a million non-English home language speakers (NEHLS) (Census 1990). As a nation we are becoming more culturally and linguistically diverse. According to data from the 1990 Census, both the number of foreign-born as a percentage of the total population and the percentage of individuals who typically speak a language other than English at home have increased significantly since 1980. Between 1980 and 1990 the number of people, aged 5 and older, who speak languages other than English at home increased by 38%. In 1980 one in nine people spoke a language other than English at home; one in seven do so now (Waggoner, 1992). Furthermore, the number of NEHLS who indicated that they do not speak English very well also increased to an estimated 14 million people. Thus, there is a growing need for ESL instruction.

This population of NEHLS consists of learners of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, and practitioners are not typically experienced in addressing their needs. In the past, not much attention had been given to the approach and design of ESL workplace literacy programs especially those dealing with diverse populations. The Midwest faces such challenges in its programs.

This study represents a starting point from which to discuss a variety of issues. The data gathered about ESL workplace literacy programs found in the Midwest can be extremely helpful in order to avoid problems for those who are considering the implementation of such programs as well as to those who already have them. By examining the instructional and administrative practices of these programs, adult educators can become aware of effective and ineffective strategies. Therefore, they will be able to determine which practices are applicable to their own specific contexts and improve or modify their procedures.

Limitations

The study will be delimited by the following constraints:

1. The selection of interviewees and observational sites was limited to the area of the midwest United States in order to address the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of a multi-ethnic English as a second language (ESL) population in ESL workplace literacy programs.
2. Since there are only a few ESL workplace programs, an in-depth analysis will be limited to four effective programs.

Operational Definitions

Adult literacy - the basic skills in language, reading, writing, and computation taught for individuals' general functioning in society.

Assessment - the means of determining the skills and knowledge of individuals by written and performance tests in relation to a specified criteria.

Functional illiterate - a person unable to read, write or compute well enough to participate and perform everyday tasks, such as reading the newspaper.

Illiterate - a person unable to read or write at all.

Literacy audit - "an investigation that leads to definitions of jobs in terms of their basic literacy skills requirements and then to an assessment of the workforce's proficiency in those skills" (U.S. Department of Labor and Education, 1988).

Partnerships and organizational principles - defined as "how the program functions in the context of the host company, with special attention to the role of supervisors, union stewards, and other key company/agency players in promoting and supporting the program" (Workplace education: Voices from the field, 1991).

Task analysis - the means of breaking down a task into smaller units and then sequencing these units in an order of priority based on their importance in performing the job (Carnevale et al., 1990).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study attempts to examine the instructional and administrative practices in ESL workplace literacy programs to help practitioners implement and improve program effectiveness for ESL learners with limited literacy skills. To fully comprehend the domain of this study, a literature review on workplace literacy and adult ESL literacy was conducted. This review is divided into two segments: "Workplace Literacy" and "Overview of Adult ESL literacy."

WORKPLACE LITERACY PROGRAMS

Background of American Workforce

Under President Clinton's administration the Goals 2000: Educate America Act became law. Under this act, goal six states that "Every adult will be literate and have the skills to compete in the global economy and participate in American democracy." The president's action is likely to have been, in part, a response to the notable growing statistics of the ESL population. According to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, over 7.3 million people immigrated to the United States from 1980 to 1990, the second largest wave of immigration since the beginning of the century (Hayflich & Lomperis, 1992). With these people in the workplace, companies are finding out that they must address limitations in communication skills to retain valued employees, meet safety standards and compete in the national and international marketplace. This influx of new populations dominates the campaign towards workplace literacy.

Emergence of Workplace Literacy

Workplace literacy originated with Thomas Stitch's analysis of literacy demands in the military. Stitch found that using job-specific materials improved job performance more than using general academic materials (1975). Additional research of literacy demands in civilian jobs has found that: a significant amount of work time involves reading; reading tasks are often repetitive; and literacy demands of school are different from those in the workplace and often do not prepare workers for employment (Mikulecky, 1982; Mikulecky et al., 1987; Mikulecky & Diehl, 1980).

Attributes of Effective Workplace Literacy Programs

The National Workplace Literacy Program (NWLP), administered by U.S. Department of Education, provides financial support to workplace literacy demonstration projects operated by partnerships of businesses, labor organizations, and educational organizations. It was originally designed in response to the increasing concerns about the nation's workforce possessing insufficient basic skills as this situation was adversely affecting productivity and competitiveness in the world marketplace. The purpose of this section is to present a composite of the general characteristics that are present in successful workplace literacy programs.

The NWLP represents the major source of Federal funding for workplace literacy projects. Examination of projects funded during the NWLP's first year of operation has provided information that identifies key components associated with effective workplace literacy projects. Based on the material collected at the 37 funded programs, in addition to current literature on workplace literacy, the NWLP staff identified four components associated with effective workplace literacy projects. However, Kutner et al. (1991) stress that empirical data to document that these components are essential for project success are not available.

1. ***Active involvement by project partners such as businesses and unions in planning, designing, and operating the project:***

In 1991 Bussert analyzed the descriptions of 107 United States workplace literacy programs and found that 92% involved two or more partners. At times these partnerships consisted of multiple unions or multiple businesses, a school and a business, or a government agency, a business and a union.

NWLP recognized as a key factor for successful programs that business and labor union partners are generally supportive and actively involved with workplace literacy projects. Project partners typically provide space for classrooms, monitor program services, and provide financial support for program services (Fields et al., 1987; National Alliance of Business, 1989; U.S. Department of Labor, 1988).

2. ***Active and ongoing involvement by employees in conducting literacy task analyses and determining worker literacy levels:***

Businesses as well as employees benefit when workers have input into the content of instructional services at the worksite program (Carnevale et al., 1988, 1990). Employees at the study sites had been involved with workplace literacy projects in a variety of ways: planning the project, conducting literacy task analyses, determining the literacy needs of workers, and participating on advisory panels. The active and ongoing involvement by employees who are potential participants in the project is an important component associated with project success.

3. ***Systematically analyzing on-the-job literacy requirements:***

Systematic analyses of on-the-job literacy requirements are known as literacy task analyses and include analyzing specific job responsibilities, skills required to accomplish the job, and written job materials. Some type of literacy task analysis was conducted at most of the study sites. Information from these analyses was used at the study sites to inform the design of instructional services.

This activity is supported by research which indicates that analyzing the literacy requirements of jobs is an essential component of workplace literacy projects. Such analyses inform the content of instructional services, the design of instructional materials, and the measures for assessing improved participant literacy levels.

4. ***Developing instructional materials related to literacy skills required on the job:***

At all study sites, at least some of the instructional materials were related to job literacy requirements. Such materials included corporate manuals and instructions for operating machinery and other equipment. This is also true at sites that had not conducted a literacy task analysis at the beginning of the project.

Research literature in the area of workplace literacy emphasizes the importance of using instructional materials that are related to literacy skills required on the job. These literacy skills may be specifically related to individual jobs, or to almost any skill that is required to successfully perform the job. Sticht and Mikulecky emphasize that "Skills and knowledge are best learned if they are presented in a context that is meaningful to the persons" (1984).

Features of workplace literacy programs

The purpose of this section is to succinctly describe the general patterns and characteristics likely to be present in more successful workplace literacy programs. Note that research on workplace literacy programs is limited primarily to descriptive studies of the organization and content of existing programs.

Educational providers:

The importance of establishing partnership relationships between providers of workplace literacy programs is identified by Sarmiento (1989) as a key factor in successful programs. Union-involved programs described in most commonly cited studies and reports on workplace literacy are recognized as the most innovative and most exemplary in the country (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1987; Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1990). Because unions focus on worker needs, unions devise worker-centered programs in which worker needs determine how the programs are designed, what they offer, and how they are taught (Lytle, 1988).

Businesses have also become providers of programs. In order to educate its workforce the private sector has had to invest into workplace literacy programs. Sticht (1988) who conducted much pioneer research in this area asserted:

> Business and industry is going to have to pick up a greater portion of education. It will probably cost between $5 billion and $10 billion over the next few years to establish literacy programs and retool current ones. But the returns of that are going to be tenfold (p.40).

Most companies that provide workplace training do not have the instructional and support staff to provide skills training (Carnevale, 1990; Fields et al., 1987). Instead, companies form some sort of partnership with one of the following associations in order to upgrade worker's basic and technical skills: educational organizations, unions, stated education agencies, businesses, and community based organizations (Mendel, 1988; U.S. Department of Labor, 1988).

Mikulecky et al. (1996) reviewed the organizational frameworks of 121 workplace literacy program reports that were entered into the ERIC database between the years 1990 and 1993. Nearly all programs involved partnerships of some sort. For instance, 92 (76%) programs were linked to specific employers. These 92 employer-based programs involved the following partnerships: 68 (73.9%) were partners with community agencies; 48 (52%) college partners; (10.8%) management/labor partners. Only 6 (6.5%) of the programs were unaffiliated with partners.

Mikulecky (1996) also examined the goals delineated in the workplace program reports. He found that most programs reported multiple goals as: 50% of the programs reported connecting job literacy training to specific training to improve workers' jobs skills and work ethic; 49% of the programs sought to improve literacy skills that were job-related or linked to the functional context of the workplace; 57% reported learner-centered general basic skills as a major goal; 30% reported a goal of training for retention or advancement; and 21% reported morale as a goal.

Reasons for programs:

A study conducted by the Center for Public Resource (1985) supplies information in regard to the reasons for providing workplace literacy programs (Fields et al., 1987). The Center conducted a survey of 184 businesses throughout United States. The business people were asked to rank order the cost factors which in their professional judgement, had the most significant corporate impact. The findings indicated that general productivity costs were ranked first in importance, followed by the additional supervisory time necessary, product quality, time and effort spent to increase skills, and danger to worker safety.

Program planning:

Program participants are recruited through various methods including supervisor referral, personal contact; union endorsements, word-of-mouth, and notices or flyers (Fields et al., 1987; U.S. Department of Labor, 1988). In addition to recruitment practices, there are other factors which also influence participation. The decision to participate could revolve around the program name, schedule and location of classes, and the availability of support services (i.e., child care; transportation). In general, workplace literacy programs tend to be taught on-site for employee convenience.

Assessing the employees is an essential factor for a successful program. Standardized tests (which consist of norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests) are frequently used to determine placement into a workplace literacy program, to assess progress, and to measure acquired skills (Collino, Aderman, & Askov, 1989). Two commercially available tests that include workplace-related items are the Basic English Skills Test (BEST) and the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) ESL Appraisal (Burt & Saccomano, 1995). However, much controversy exists in regard to nationally standardized tests as there is incongruence between what training programs teach, what learners learn, and what the nationally standardized tests assess. Sticht (1990) contends that "tests are not sensitive enough to the specifics of what is being taught in the program" (p.11). Moreover, "It is considerably more important to apply basic skills in specific job situation than it is to demonstrate such skills on standardized test" (Sticht & Mikulecky, 1984, p.8).

An alternative to nationally standardized testing is the development of a competency-based test that is geared directly to the learning objectives of a specific training program. In addition, other alternatives could include: portfolio development and evaluation; learner centered curricula; performance-developed tests where the learner must perform to indicate that specific workplace tasks have been achieved (Alamprese & Kay, 1993).

Instruction:

A variety of methods and strategies are used in successful workplace programs including: small group learning, computer-assisted instruction, and individual tutoring (Fields et al., 1987; U.S. Department of Labor, 1988). However, the selection and requirements for workplace program teachers is an essential feature for program effectiveness. Many times program planners solicit an educational organization or literacy provider to deliver the program. Generally, large companies are more likely to rely on in-house instructional staff (Carnevale et al., 1990; Lee, 1988).

Workplace instructors should: have expertise in the subject area; be familiarized with adult learning theory; have the ability to use instructional approaches that are not school based; be able to work with company personnel and adhere to company requirements (Carnevale et al., 1990; Fields et al., 1987).

Instructional materials:

The American Society for Training and Development asserts that job-based material provides the most effective improvements in employee performance (Carnevale et al., 1990). Consequently, this material allows the employee to build on what s/he already knows, to retain new skills by using them in the context in which they were learned, and to improve thinking and problem-solving skills (Askov et al., 1989; Philippi, 1988; Sticht, 1987).

A program emphasizing job-based materials, thus, would be classified as employing a functional context oriented approach. Such programs gather instructional materials from actual work materials and implement them into the basic skills classes (Fields et al., 1987; U.S. Department of Labor, 1988).

OVERVIEW OF ADULT ESL LITERACY

Background Demographics

Ever since the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries immigration has been a major focus of U.S. population growth. Since 1960, immigration has shifted away from European immigration to immigration from Latin America and Asia, and the same period has seen the emergence of undocumented immigration (Woodrow, 1990).

Findings from the 1982 English Language Proficiency Study suggest that within the U.S. population, there were between 17 to 20 million adults who were found to be functionally illiterate in English (Johnston & Packer, 1987). Using these data, the Clearinghouse for Literacy Education estimates that 7 million of these adults (more than a third) spoke a language other than English at home (Waggoner, 1991). In addition a report by the U.S. Departments of Labor, Education and Commerce (1988) calculates that 22 percent of all adult illiterates in the United States are Latino while 39 to 49 percent of all adult Latinos in U.S. are not literate in English.

Up to 2.5 million permanent residents, most of whom were not fluent in English, were added to the population during the 1980's through the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). California estimates that over 1.6 million newly legalized persons are eligible for permanent residency under IRCA. However, over one-third of this population is not literate in their native language (Stiles, 1990). Over 80% of this population is functioning at a level which indicates that they have not mastered the education skills normally associated with the first six years of school (IRCA, 1989).

The immigrants of the 1980's included more rural villagers and persons with little education than did the immigrants of the 1970's. This change in the composition of the immigration pool is reflected in the dramatic increase from 1979 to 1989 in the number of residents who speak a language other than English at home. Using data from the Current Population Survey, researchers reported that the number of home speakers of non-English languages, which includes many, but not all, limited English proficient residents, grew from slightly more than 17.5 million in 1979 to almost 25 million in 1989, showing a rate of growth of 40.9% in a single decade (Waggoner, 1992). However, none of these numbers inform us about how many of these limited English proficient speakers were or are not literate in any language. There is a confusion between lack of literacy in English and total lack of literacy. Researchers such as Wiley state that:

> ...no common survey definitions include literacy in languages other than English. Thus, literacy is confused with English literacy, and illiteracy is confounded with non-English literacy (1991).

Nevertheless, we do know that many of these adults have had few years of schooling in their home countries and have typically lacked the literacy skills needed to gain employment beyond entry level jobs or to participate fully in an English speaking society. A significant percentage of these adults are not able to make normal progress in English as a Second Language (ESL) programs because they have difficulty with written language. These adults have been designated as "ESL literacy students" (Wrigley & Guth, 1992).

Many Adult Basic Education (ABE) and literacy programs are not equipped to meet the educational needs of these adults. Most literacy materials are designed for English speaking adults who were born in this country and are familiar with the language and culture of the United States. Thus, vocabulary, structure, and content may not be appropriate for adults with limited English proficiency in English. On the other hand, ESL programs have difficulty serving non-literate adults since most ESL texts assume that even beginners are literate in their native language. As a result, many ESL teachers are ill-prepared to deal with students who cannot read textbooks or copy words from the blackboard.

In trying to serve adults who do not know how to read and write well in their first language, ABE and literacy programs face the additional challenge of how to deal with the great diversity of students that need help. Although large numbers of Spanish speaking adults enroll in ESL programs, there are other students whose language is based on a non-alphabetic system or non-Roman alphabet. For example, the Hmong, who come from a culture with a limited literacy tradition, demonstrate a special challenge since they may have difficulty understanding the concept of print. Within the diverse ESL population, adult educators will be faced with more challenges in teaching than in a traditional single language ESL class (Shaw, 1984). Dixon adds that "students who lack literacy in any language clearly have more difficulty in learning to read and write English than do students who are literate in their native tongue" (1987).

Practitioners, policymakers, and researchers have expressed concerns about improving literacy and language learning for these adults. Statistics from 1980 demonstrate that ESL learners constituted under twenty percent of all those participating in federally assisted adult programs (Lerche, 1985). By 1991 the ESL population in adult programs had risen to 32%. Today 40% of those enrolled in adult basic education programs are ESL learners (Wrigley & Guth, 1992).

Still, there had not been any consensus on how to best serve the basic language and literacy needs of the ESL literacy students until 1992. Actually, no national studies had identified successful adult ESL literacy programs or documented promising practices. Although there were some descriptions of individual or general programs, these often emphasized a particular focus such as amnesty preparation or family literacy (Anderson, 1988; Auerbach, 1990; Amnesty education, 1990; Young & Padilla, 1990).

In response to these concerns, Congress created the National English Literacy Demonstration Program for Adults of Limited English Proficiency. Under this program, the United States Department of Education commissioned its first national research study: "Adult ESL literacy programs and practices" (1992). The focus of this study was to investigate the innovative and current practices of Adult ESL programs. The researchers reviewed 123 program descriptions and conducted site visits to 11 ESL literacy programs across the United States[4]. This study is addressed under the philosophical orientation of Adult ESL, pages 38-40.

Cross-cultural Training[5]

Although language is the foremost obstacle to clear communication between employers and recently immigrated employees, cultural differences can also stand in the way (Solomon, 1993). Articles in magazines and business reports often describe some of the miscommunications experienced at the workplace. For example, a recent article by Erickson (1992) claimed that:

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[4] For further information about this study, refer to Wrigley, H.S., & Guth, G.J.A. (1990). Background Information: A look at program components and innovative practices in adult ESL literacy.

[5] When employed informally, the terms intercultural and cross-cultural are often used interchangeably (Harms, 1973). In this study, cross-cultural refers to any communication between two people who in any particular domain, do not share a common linguistic or cultural background (Thomas, 1983).

> An East coast retail baker once ended up firing a dishwasher, not because the man was a poor worker, but because he repeatedly disobeyed the orders given by his manager, a woman. In certain cultures, the males call all the shots and some guys, even after they've moved to this country, just can't get away from that way of thinking, the bakery owner noted (p.52).

Currently industries across the country encounter employees who are hardworking but do not understand English. A worker may know enough English to get the job, but may not understand directions completely. This is especially dangerous when it comes to safety regulations. Many immigrants, in keeping with the teachings of their native cultures, tend to be more reserved than their American coworkers. Meanwhile, questions and opinions are sometimes left unspoken, causing a communication gap.

Certain immigrants believe that it is impolite to ask questions. Frequently, employees are hesitant to ask questions or communicate their desires because they feel it is not their place to converse freely with their employers

(Erickson, 1992). In addition, they might be so unsure of their language skills that they believe they might have misunderstood the instructions. Therefore, they are afraid to act (Solomon, 1993). Language learners need to come to understand what is meant by the words and expressions they hear, and to be able to respond to them appropriately so that unnecessary miscommunication can be avoided.

This concern with communication between communicators of dissimilar cultural backgrounds is known as intercultural communication. It involves a communicator and audience of entirely different to slightly different cultures (Samovar & Porter, 1973). Intercultural communication training refers to formal efforts designed to prepare people for more effective interpersonal relations when they interact with individuals from cultures other than their own (Carbaugh, 1990; Paige, 1992; Brislin & Yoshida, 1994). This instruction is most frequently encountered as part of cross-cultural training programs designed to prepare people to the wide variety of issues they face when adjusting to another culture (Bhawuk, 1990; Brislin, 1990).

The terms "cross-cultural training" and "intercultural communication training" are often used interchangeably. One reason is that it is hard to think of cross-cultural adjustment issues that do not involve communication among people. Another reason is that attitudes and skills directly related to intercultural communication are strongly related to people's overall adjustment to, and satisfaction with their work in other cultures (Hammer, 1984; Brislin & Yoshida, 1994).

The way we communicate is influenced by unconscious interpretations that are inherent in the way human beings process information. Carried to an extreme, such assumptions result in stereotypes. In unfamiliar situations, we make judgments about people or their behavior based on a number of culturally-based assumptions. These judgments may or may not prove accurate in subsequent encounters. In a multicultural setting, unconscious values and assumptions are likely to have even greater variability, and the potential for misunderstanding increases.
For example, many Americans consider direct eye contact to mean that a person is honest and confident, whereas in some cultures, one lowers one's eyes to show respect and humility. In some cultures, courtesy demands that people not ask personal questions of new acquaintances, whereas in other cultures, to do so indicates friendliness. Such differences, if not understood, can create barriers to hiring, training, and promoting immigrant workers.

When employers and employees from other countries interact with one another, especially if there are language barriers, they are likely to discover that other persons do not act nor think alike. Thus, they start out prone to misunderstand each other. Moreover, this miscommunication gets compounded by real cultural differences in the way one interprets body language and physical behavior. Americans need to be conscious of the fact that the cultural background of a communicator influences almost every detail and every pattern of his communication activities. According to leading cross-cultural experts, culture and communication are inseparable:

> Culture is a code we learn and share, and learning and sharing require communication. And communication requires coding and symbols, which must be learned and shared (Smith cited in Henderson & Milhouse, 1987, p.24).

Therefore, projecting our attitudes, beliefs, and values onto other persons especially foreigners can lead to serious misinterpretations and distortions:

> In daily life it happens all the time that we presume that the psychology of other people is the same as ours. We suppose that what is pleasing or desirable to us is the same to others and that what seems bad to us must also seem bad to them... And we still attribute to the other fellow all the evil and inferior qualities that we do not like to recognize in ourselves, and therefore have to criticize and attack him (Carl Jung cited in Henderson and Milhouse, 1987, p.207).

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One way to facilitate communication between employers and employees from different cultural backgrounds is to teach them some basic language and cultural awareness skills. One key to comprehending human behavior and civilizations is culture. With greater cultural sensitivity and skills exercised by businesses, corporations will function more smoothly and therefore will take advantage of what each group has to offer. By applying cross-cultural training in a multicultural work setting, the results are likely to include: increased confidence and self-esteem on the part of LEP workers; better communication between LEP workers and supervisors; more interaction (both on the job and during breaks) between LEP employees and their co-workers; and better working teams (Thomas et al., 1991; Solomon, 1993).

Definitions of Adult ESL Literacy

Adult ESL literacy is a relatively new field that borrows from a number of related disciplines. To develop a framework for adult ESL literacy, practitioners and researchers have borrowed from many fields including adult learning theory, ESL methodology, sociolinguistics, cognitive psychology, anthropology, educational linguistics, and literacy theory and practice (whole language approaches, the Language Experience Approach, Freirean pedagogy), among others.

At present, there is no one widely accepted definition of adult ESL literacy or even of literacy. Some programs define ESL literacy within the larger contexts of their learners' abilities and/or the curriculum process they implement.

The discussion of adult ESL literacy brings one to question what literacy itself means. Consensus appears to be that there are a variety of literacies, meaning different literacies for distinct contexts. However, much debate exists over what counts as literacy. A widely accepted definition developed in 1985 comes from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The following definition originated from a study conducted by Lerche where the researcher surveyed two hundred adult literacy programs and visited thirty-eight of them:

> Using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential (Lerche, 1985).

The National Literacy Act of 1991 (P.L. 102-73) adds reference to the English language, to solve problems, and to function on the job in its definition of literacy as:

> An individual's ability to read, write and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one's goals, and develop one's

knowledge and potential.

Although most researchers and practitioners agree that literacy is about reading, writing, using language and the printed words, further controversy exists over the usage and context of literacy. Acquiring literacy can sometimes be seen as a step function: "reach the plateau of being literate and you possess a tool for all seasons, for all occasions, for all jobs" (Crandall, 1992, p.90). While some view literacy as a facilitator of a critical examination of the condition of one's own life, others view it in the context of social practices or of culture (Crandall, 1992). There are, however, various perspectives on literacy and illiteracy which are generally shaped by economic, social, political, and cultural dimensions. Crandall and Ruth maintain that rather than being based on a single construct, literacy is defined as a plurality of literacies, shaped by a variety of social contexts.

Many literacy educators support the notion of a literacy continuum which develops and increases as a person gains experience with different types of literacies (Crandall & Imel, 1991; Gillespie, 1990). This continuum can expand along several dimensions, including functional literacy (using literacy to accomplish everyday tasks), sociocultural literacy (understanding how literacy practices differ among groups and adapting the use of literacy to various purposes), expressive literacy (using literacy to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings related to personal experience or reflections on life), and critical literacy (using literacy to critically examine and comment on the circumstances of one's life) as learners gain self-confidence and competence (Wrigley & Guth, 1992).

Although literacy practices in the classroom may emphasize one of these dimensions, most innovative programs choose various combinations to provide learners with a broad range of literacy experiences. This type of combination helps assure that learner needs are met and that different learning styles are taken into account in teaching.

ESL Learners

One of the biggest challenges for adult ESL literacy is that students' levels of English proficiency as well as their abilities to read and write tend to vary. Simple categories cannot convey the complexity of learners' backgrounds, language and literacy goals. Yet, different viewpoints on adult ESL literacy can be clarified by focusing on the attributes of ESL literacy students.

1. ***From the perspective of a provider of a full range of ESL classes -***

ESL literacy students may be those who are unable to make normal progress in ESL classes since they have difficulty with written language.

2. ***From the perspective of an employer -***

Adult ESL literacy students may be language minority employees whose communication skills in English need to improve to promote communication on the job, to enhance job performance, to facilitate promotability, or to ensure participation in new initiatives such as Total Quality Management (TQM).

3. ***From the perspective of a community adult basic educator -***

ESL literacy students may be those who cannot read and write in their native language or in English and whose higher order thinking skills can be developed by a critical examination of issues in their own community.

Distinct Features of Adult ESL

In 1994 the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and a group of ESL educators met as the Ad Hoc Policy Group to discuss ESL education. As a group they generated a list of distinct features of the adult ESL population to present to policymakers. The following characteristics were presented:

1. ***ESL is not a remedial service or a compensatory program -***

ESL programs provide an opportunity for immigrants to learn English and to participate more fully in an English speaking environment. Programs for newcomers require special cultural orientation and counseling components to help new immigrants adjust to their surroundings and learn their rights and responsibilities as U.S. residents.

2. ***Adults who are new to English need more than just literacy instruction -***

ESL learners need to develop proficiency in spoken English along with skills in reading and writing English. Along with the language system, they must also learn the rules that govern communication in various contexts such as the workplace, communities, and schools. In addition, ESL learners must develop competence in cross-cultural communication along with competence in English.

3. ***Adult ESL learners who speak little or no English require bilingual or translation support -***

Those who speak little English need basic information in a language that they can understand in order to access basic information about available services and to make informed decisions about their future.

4. ***Adults in ESL classes represent a much wider range of educational backgrounds than English speaking adults in ABE programs -***

On one end of the spectrum we find that fifty percent of adults in ESL classes have a high school diploma or its equivalent from their home countries. Their profile differs significantly from the students for whom the adult basic education system was designed (those without a high school degree or its equivalent). Therefore, the most pressing need for many ESL learners is the type of English that moves them quickly into academic or training programs so that they can attain employment commensurate with their education.

At the opposite end of the spectrum we find ESL learners who exhibit educational levels that are significantly lower than those of native English speaking program participants. There are a significant number of adults in ESL classes that have had little or no schooling in their home countries. Many of them have not had the opportunity to develop literacy skills in their mother tongue. This group needs an opportunity to develop basic literacy skills before or while they are acquiring spoken English. Currently, adult basic education programs do not take this distribution of language proficiencies into account. Moreover, there are no guidelines for considering the range of native languages possible when designing literacy programs (Gillespie, 1994; Wrigley & Guth, 1992).

5. ***ESL learners represent a national language resource -***

In the past, adult basic education has failed to appreciate the linguistic and cultural background that immigrants bring to communities, workplace, and schools. Our educational system has treated the lack of English as a deficiency that defines the individual.

ESL learners comprise a significant and ever growing portion of our nation's population. With their language, cultural diversity and strong work ethic, these learners represent a valuable human resource for this country's future productivity, econonomic competitiveness and defense (Lopez-Valadez, 1988; Zentella, 1988). Hence, ESL learners need to be seen as a resource, who will enrich our workplaces and communities.

Acquiring a Second Language

Many educators and policymakers have the misconception that language learning can be isolated from other issues and that the first thing non-native English speakers must do is learn English (Collier, 1995). Collier has developed a conceptual model to explain the complex interacting factors that learners experience when acquiring a second language during school years. According to Collier, there are four interdependent components - sociocultural, linguistic, academic, and cognitive processes - in this model.

1. *Sociocultural process* -

This encompasses all of the surrounding social and cultural processes occurring through everyday life within all contexts (home, work, community, and broader society). For instance, social patterns such as prejudice and discrimination expressed towards individuals in personal or professional contexts can influence students' achievement in school. Sociocultural processes at work in second language acquisition may include individual student variables such as self-esteem or anxiety. Collier asserts: "These factors can strongly influence the student's response to the new language, affecting the process positively only when the student is in a socioculturally supportive environment" (1995, p.3).

2. *Language development* -

This process consists of subconscious aspects of language development, formal teaching of language in school, and acquisition of the written system of language. To ensure cognitive and academic success in a second language, a learner's first language system must be developed to a high cognitive level at least through the elementary school years.

3. *Academic development* -

It includes all school work for each grade level (i.e., language arts, mathematics), grades K-12 and beyond. Academic knowledge and conceptual development transfer from the first language to the second language. Collier contends that "it is most efficient to develop academic work through the students' first language while teaching the second language during other periods of the school day through meaningful academic content" (1995, p.3).

4. *Cognitive development* -

Some researchers (Collier & Thomas, 1989; Cummins, 1991) claim that often educators neglect the crucial role of cognitive development in the first language. Educators need to address all four components of Collier's conceptual model equally to develop significant academic proficiency in a second language.

Several studies have been conducted by Thomas and Collier in the area of second language acquisition. Recent studies by these researchers (1995) have shown that non-native speakers of English with no schooling in their first language, who attend U.S. schools which provide all instruction in English (the second language), take seven to ten years or more to reach age and grade level norms of their native English speaking peers. Similarly, immigrant students who have had two to three years of first language schooling in their home country before they come to U.S. take at least five to seven years to reach typical native-speaker performance (Collier, 1995). This pattern exits across many student groups (regardless of their native language), country of origin, socioeconomic status, and other student background variables. The most significant variable is the amount of formal schooling students have received in their first language.

Components of Adult ESL Programs

In 1990 Wrigley & Guth studied the characteristics of adult ESL literacy programs in order to describe what innovative or effective programs do to foster literacy development for non-literate language minority adults and what teachers and program directors need to know in order to teach ESL literacy. Their research indicates that effective adult ESL literacy programs tend to be strong in the following components:

1. *Community outreach* -

Includes efforts to represent the program in culturally appropriate ways to the community of the learners, to reduce barriers to participation, and to facilitate access to the program. Such outreach also encompasses linkages with social service agencies, employers, other educational institutions, and vocational or training programs.

Examples of innovation: Include various ways of generating interest in the literacy program, such as asking members of the learners' community to visit neighborhood churches, clinics, schools, and other centers where adults may gather to get in contact with community members.

2. ***Needs assessment*** -

Helps identify both the needs of the larger community and the literacy goals of the individual learners. Such a needs assessment includes information on the changes taking place in the community (demographics, employment opportunities, and emerging social and political issues), as well as information about the educational, language, and cultural backgrounds of the learners. A needs assessments can also include ongoing efforts to help learners articulate their aims and assist them in setting realistic goals with respect to literacy.

Examples of innovation: Calls for active involvement of the learners, teachers, and community leaders in planning and implementing the program. In workplace programs, such an assessment would involve workers, teachers, supervisors, and managers in discussing literacy practices at the work site, needs of the company, and goals of individual workers.

3. ***Program design*** -

Articulates the goals of the program in terms of literacy and links all components to these goals. Such a design should contain enough flexibility to allow the program to respond to the changing literacy needs of students. A program that has a mandated curriculum should show how it negotiates between the requirements of the funding source and the special literacy needs and goals of the learners.

Examples of innovation: An innovative program design might be based on a working definition of literacy developed through collaborative efforts. All major aspects of the program would reflect both the educational philosophy and the goals of the program. Innovative designs include those in which a committee of student or worker delegates participate in collective problem solving and policy making.

4. ***Curriculum*** -

A strong curriculum acts as a conceptual framework that: 1) outlines the kinds of literacy the program wants to emphasize (prose literacy, document literacy, functional literacy); 2) suggests approaches, methods, and materials; and 3) links classroom teaching at the various levels with assessment and evaluation. Within the selected framework for literacy education, flexibility should be allowed for a variety of approaches to respond to different student needs and teacher preferences.

Examples of innovation: Include ways of focusing on the cognitive and creative aspects of literacy or developing an emphasis on the relationship between literacy and the socio-cultural context of students' lives. Innovation may also include the following: 1) integrating task-based or competency-based literacy with prose literacy; 2) enabling students to maintain the literacy traditions of their community; 3) using content information to increase the learners' background knowledge; and 4) emphasizing reading and writing strategies, not just skills. Innovative curricula in the workplace might combine task-based literacy with activities that foster "learning how to learn," include discussion of workers' rights, and provide opportunities for learners to work towards more personal literacy goals.

5. ***Approaches and methods*** -

Strong ESL literacy approaches and methods focus primarily on literacy use in both reading and writing (not just reading or writing practice) and reflect current knowledge of how adults with limited proficiency in English can learn to read and write continuing to develop their oral skills.

Educational materials should familiarize learners with the various forms, functions, and uses of literacy. Activities and texts should validate and reflect the experiences and literacy practices of the learners and at the same time help them to connect their personal stories to the experiences and literacy practices of others.

Examples of innovation: **Include having students read, write and publish complete texts such as simple stories, class newspapers to people outside of the classroom. Student could work in teams to gather written information on topics of interest to them and to share their findings with** others.

6. ***Initial assessment and progress evaluation*** -

Strong initial assessment **helps** determine what learners can and cannot do with respect to reading and writing. The assessment should show 1) how familiar students are with literacy in their native language; 2) how strong they are in English literacy, and 3) how well they can understand and express themselves in spoken English. Progress evaluation of students should provide evidence of student literacy gains as witnessed by teachers and experienced by the learners and should be capable of providing information requested by funding sources and other stakeholders.

Examples of innovation: Involve practices such as: creative ways of combining mandated tests with program-based assessments; and guidelines, evaluation forms, and materials that allow teachers and counselors to assess the literacy skills and education background of learners.

7. ***Staff development*** -

Foster collaboration among the staff and help teachers, tutors, and aides to expand their instructional repertoire. It can encourage teacher to reflect on the way they teach and to seek input from peers and other professionals. Also it can seek to build on the rich and varied experiences of staff members and teachers, especially those who come from the learners' community, and provide teachers with access to a wider network of ideas and practices.

Examples of innovation: Incentives or release time should be included for teachers who want to develop lessons and create literacy materials that better meet the needs of students. Overall, innovative staff development regards literacy teachers as professional educators and supports and rewards their efforts accordingly.

8. *Support services* -

Services such as bilingual assistance, child care, transportation stipends, personal and educational counseling and referrals to community resources should be included to help reduce barriers to program participation. In the case of workplace literacy projects, strong support services may be evidenced by paid release time from work or incentives for participating in the program.

Examples of innovation: Include linkages with community organizations that will provide services and information on site. Also outreach workers from the community who will be available to interpret and translate important documents for learners should be involved.

Philosophical Orientation of Adult ESL

Based on a national study of effective and innovative practices in adult ESL literacy, Wrigley and Guth depicted six basic philosophical orientations in the adult ESL literacy programs (Wrigley, 1993). In their study, the researchers reviewed 123 program descriptions and conducted site visits to 11 ESL literacy programs across the United States. Some of these programs emphasized native language literacy, whereas others focused on ESL literacy. According to their investigation, funding mandates the orientation the program reflects. The following orientations were determined from the research:

1. *Common educational core* -

Designed to give all students a common set of educational experiences including the development of basic literacy skills, command of standard English, and understanding of common cultural knowledge. This orientation usually takes a basic skills approach.

2. *Social and economic adaptation* -

Conceived to help adults acquire skills and knowledge needed to be self-sufficient; to function effectively in society; to access services; and to integrate into the mainstream culture. Federally funded workplace programs mandate a functional context curriculum which reflects this orientation: teach the skills needed for improved job performance.

3. *Development of cognitive and academic skills* -

Emphasizes metacognition (learning how to learn) as its goal. This orientation stresses strategies over skills, process over content, and understanding over memorization.

4. *Personal relevance* -

Stresses personal meaning and school's responsibility to develop literacy programs that accomplish this meaning. ESL literacy curricula have personal growth and self-actualization through literacy as its principal goals.

5. *Social change* -

Emphasizes issues of power and control on both the classroom and program levels. In this orientation, educational opportunities are given to adults as they are in charge of their own learning.

6. *Technological management of education* -

Featured as being value or goal free. This orientation is often linked to individualized instruction where students are pre-tested, given tasks to complete, and then evaluated to determine if they have mastered the required concept.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this literature review is to acquaint the reader with the underlying concepts of workplace literacy and adult ESL. Some basic ideas that the reader should comprehend in this study are the following:

a) Currently there is no widely accepted definition of adult ESL literacy. Consensus appears to be that there are a variety of literacies, meaning different literacies for different contexts. The National Literacy Act of 1991 defines literacy as: "*An individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society ...*"

b) The Ad Hoc Policy Group generated a list of 5 distinct features of adult ESL population:
   1. *ESL is not a remedial service or a compensatory program;*
   2. *Adults who are new to English need more than just literacy instruction;*

3. *Adult ESL learners who speak little or no English require bilingual or translation support;*
4. *Adults in ESL classes represent a much wider range of educational backgrounds than English speaking adults in ABE programs;*
5. *ESL learners represent a national language resource.*

In addition, the research on the areas of workplace literacy and adult ESL provide the conceptual framework to investigate the administrative and instructional practices of ESL workplace literacy programs in the Midwest. The conceptual framework utilized for this study is based on the four key attributes associated with effective workplace literacy programs (Kutner et al., 1991):

1. *Active involvement by project partners such as businesses and unions in planning, designing, and operating the project;*
2. *Active and ongoing involvement by employees in conducting literacy task analyses and determining worker literacy levels;*
3. *Systematically analyzing on-the-job literacy requirements;*
4. *Developing instructional materials related to literacy skills required on the job;*

combined with the eight key program components identified from the research literature on adult ESL literacy programs[6]:

1. *Community outreach;*
2. *Needs assessment;*
3. *Program design;*
4. *Curriculum;*
5. *Approaches and methods;*
6. *Initial assessment & progress evaluation;*
7. *Staff development;*
8. *Support services.*

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[6] Based on the 1992 National Research Study of Adult ESL literacy programs by Guth & Wrigley.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this study was to examine the administrative and instructional practices (key components of effective programs) in ESL workplace literacy programs to help practitioners implement and improve program effectiveness for ESL learners with limited literacy skills. This was an exploratory study which searched for prevalent and innovative procedures in ESL workplace literacy programs.

The present study was divided into three phases. *Phase I* solicited the identification of ESL workplace literacy programs within segments of the Midwest (the states of Illinois and Indiana). *Phase II* established content validity of the survey instrument. Ten identified specialists in adult education/ESL workplace literacy were asked to evaluate the design, content, and format of the research instruments. After the survey instrument was validated, it was directed to 22 identified teachers and/or human resources development professionals whose companies operate ESL workplace literacy programs in segments of the Midwest. This phase solicited an in-depth examination of identified ESL workplace literacy programs with a linguistic diversity among its learners.

PHASE III consisted of an in-depth investigation of four ESL workplace literacy programs. Telephone conversations and on-site interviews were conducted with program directors and teachers in order to obtain additional data in regard to the programs.

The primary data for this study were collected by: a review of relevant ESL workplace literacy literature; telephone interviews with state education officials to learn about ESL workplace literacy programs; surveys of directors of ESL workplace literacy programs; telephone conversations with program directors; site visits to four programs; individual and group interviews with program administrators, and literacy teachers as well as classroom observations; and review of documents such as training manuals, teaching materials, etc.

Case study reports were generated based on the site visitations. The data collection and observations of the case study were guided by the framework of the four identified attributes of effective workplace literacy programs (Kutner et al., 1991):

1) *Active involvement by project partners such as businesses and unions in planning, designing, and operating the project;*
2) *Active and ongoing involvement by employees in conducting literacy task analyses and determining worker literacy levels;*

3) *Systematically analyzing on-the-job literacy requirements;*

4) *Developing instructional materials related to literacy skills required on the job;*

combined with eight key program components identified from the research literature on adult ESL literacy programs[7]: *1) Community outreach; 2) Needs assessment; 3) Program design; 4) Curriculum; 5) Approaches and methods; 6) Initial assessment and progress evaluation; 7) Staff development; 8 Support services.*

There are two research goals which were addressed in this study.

Goals

Some ESL workplace literacy programs, such as those found in the Midwest, serve several different language and cultural groups rather than a single predominant language group (i.e., Hispanics). The first goal of this study was:

GOAL 1 - *To describe to adult basic educators and program directors the administrative and instructional practices as well as lessons learned from these Midwestern ESL workplace literacy programs.*

The data for this goal were based on a survey of 22 ESL workplace literacy programs followed by four in-depth program examinations. The following questions based on eight key program components of adult ESL programs (identified by Wrigley and Guth in the literature research were used to address this goal:

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[7] Based on the 1992 National Research Study of Adult ESL literacy programs by Guth & Wrigley.

Program Development

Curriculum Goals:

1. What are the goals of ESL workplace literacy programs?

Program Design:

2. What special adjustments are performed in the program when the ESL population is multi-ethnic?
3. What is the underlying philosophical orientation of the program? (i.e., development of basic literacy skills, cultural knowledge, English for specific purposes)

Approaches and Methods:

4. What teaching approach is used in ESL workplace literacy programs? (i.e., communicative approach, grammar-translation, whole language)
5. What teaching methods are utilized in ESL workplace literacy programs? (i.e., role-plays, worksheets, whole language)
6. How are cultural issues addressed in ESL workplace literacy programs?

Staff Development:

7. How do ESL workplace literacy programs staff teachers and volunteers?
8. How do ESL workplace literacy programs train teachers and volunteers?

Assessment and Evaluation

Initial Assessment and Progress Evaluation:

9. What type of needs assessment and literacy task analyses are conducted prior to the development of the curriculum?
10. How are the ESL workplace literacy program's outcomes evaluated?
11. How does the program identify workers eligible for ESL instruction? (ex. supervisors identify workers)

Broad Community Support

Community Outreach:

12. What type of relationship exists between the educational service providers (from outside the business) and representatives from business, labor union or joint union-management?

Support Systems:

13. What instructional and support services are offered?
14. How are participants recruited?

GOAL 2 - ***To refine and further develop the framework suggested by the research literature for examining ESL workplace literacy programs.*** (See pp.19-49).

1. How do ESL workplace literacy programs reflect the various definitions of adult ESL literacy? (See pp.33-35).
2. To what degree do ESL workplace literacy programs reflect the distinct features of adult ESL populations as outlined by the Ad Hoc Policy Group? (See pp.36-39).
3. To what degree are the components and orientations of effective adult ESL programs identified by Wrigley and Guth reflected in ESL workplace literacy programs? (See pp.39-47).
4. To what degree are the attributes of effective workplace literacy programs identified by the National Workplace Literacy Program at the U.S. Department of Education reflected in ESL workplace literacy programs? (See pp.20-23).

DATA COLLECTION

Subjects

PHASE I

Subjects in *Phase I* suggested and identified effective ESL workplace programs in the Illinois and Indiana region. The target population consists of key officials from a variety of sources (i.e., the State Departments of Labor, State Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) offices, Private Industry Councils, State Departments of Education, etc.). Since no list of ESL workplace literacy programs currently exists, this compilation of expert opinion is necessary. More detail on actual process for subject identification is provided in the procedures section. Approximately 30 persons were contacted through telephone conversations during this phase.

Phase II

During *Phase II*, approximately 10 specialists[8] in adult education/ESL workplace literacy in Illinois and Indiana were contacted to validate the survey and data collection instruments. These experts were selected through the recommendations of *Phase I* experts.

Approximately 22 identified program directors whose companies operate ESL workplace literacy programs in Illinois and Indiana were asked to complete the survey instrument.

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[8] Specialists included: Literacy Coordinator from Indiana's Dept. of Education; Directors of NCLE and U.S. Dept. of Vocational and Adult Education; ESL workplace instructors with over 8 yrs. of experience; Literacy Consultants from Indiana and Illinois Literacy & Technical Education Resource Center.

Phase III

In-depth telephone conversations were conducted with six to eight program directors in order to obtain additional data prior to the selection of four effective programs for site visits. Four effective ESL workplace literacy programs were selected for on-site interviews and observations. Program partners, teachers, and students participated in those interviews and observations.

Criteria For Site Selection

ESL workplace literacy programs were examined to determine the characteristics of the administrative and instructional practices. A close in-depth examination was undertaken in four ESL workplace literacy programs that had been identified as being most effective.

In order for a workplace literacy program to be recognized as being "effective" it must meet one or more of the following criteria: national recognition by the National Workplace Literacy Program; awards given by the state and/or federal government for outstanding literacy programs; successful outcomes; best participation and/or retention rates; longest running program; renewed state and federal funding. In an attempt to further refine which of these programs were most effective, the Illinois Secretary of State Literacy Office was contacted. To verify that the educational provider had been successful in meeting the educational and training needs of its business partner, a telephone discussion was first conducted with the Illinois Workplace Coordinator and subsequently with the Illinois Literacy Resource Development Center Director. During both discussions, the researcher solicited for the Coordinator and Director to identify the educational providers which had been recognized for their program success.

The Workplace Coordinator stressed the importance of the following characteristics to determine if a training consultant has the skills to develop and deliver a successful workplace literacy program:

- aligns the program with company objectives, practices, and job requirements
- involves management, supervisors, employers and unions in program development
- conducts a needs assessment

The conversation with the Center Director also supported the information given by the Workplace Coordinator. The director, however, emphasized five key features for delivering a successful program:

- trained about corporate culture (experience about what the company does and contacts company personnel, including labor union and human resources)
- conducts a needs assessment
- performs an evaluation (a pre- and post-test; TABE is most often used; tied to program goals; reports back to workers/union/company)
- provides staff development (basic skills training on-site and off-site)

- curriculum development tailored to the worksite

Thus, an educational provider was recognized as being effective if it had successfully accomplished the above features.

In addition to these attributes and recommendations by the staff of the Illinois Literacy Resource Center, the four sites were selected to reflect variation in at least two or more of the following factors: (Refer to Appendix A for criteria requirements)

- Presence of an ESL component
- Presence of a diverse ESL (multi-ethnic) population
- Presence of functional context literacy training
- Presence of different types of educational service providers (i.e., state departments of education, community based organization, community colleges, universities, private companies)
- Presence of different types of business partners (i.e., mid-size and large businesses, manufacturing and service sector businesses)
- Presence of a labor union involvement

These sites were limited to the Midwest. The target states of Indiana and Illinois were chosen for a variety of reasons: 1) there is a relatively small but growing ESL population (Census, 1990); 2) ethnic and language diversity in the ESL population; 3) large sector of manufacturing and service industries; 4) lack of research-based information regarding ESL workplace literacy programs; 5) limited record of ESL workplace literacy programs in the Midwest.

Instrument Development

Phase I

This initial phase consists of telephone interviews with 30 key people from various sources (i.e. Departments of Education, JTPA offices, etc.) in the states of Illinois and Indiana in order to identify ESL workplace literacy programs. Currently, there are no available records to locate ESL workplace literacy programs. Seven open-ended questions were asked during the interviews. (Refer to Appendix B for a guide to questions).

Phase II

The study used a modified version of a survey questionnaire originally developed by Wright (1993) to determine the incidence and program practices of workplace literacy training in Fortune 500 and Service 500 companies. Wright's original survey consists of 130 questions, categorized in six themes: program design features, instructional materials, recruitment and selection of trainers, recruitment and selection of program participants, participation, assessment and evaluation. Key findings from this study inform us that the major focus of these model programs is basic skills education. Although Wright inquired if ESL was offered in the literacy programs, no detailed questions addressed the nature of the training (i.e. cultural sensitivity, linguistic competence[9], and job performance). Furthermore, no questions were asked in reference to the employees' educational and linguistic backgrounds.

For this study, the researcher condensed Wright's survey instrument to 19 questions focusing on the design features of the ESL workplace literacy programs. There are three major types of questions on the survey instrument.

The first type is a multiple choice item, such as Question #7: *"From what source does your company typically recruit trainers for your ESL literacy program?"*. The second type of survey item uses a response scale, such as Question #13: *"Please rate the effectiveness of the following strategies for recruiting prospective ESL program participants by checking one response for each item listed below."* The third type of survey item utilizes an interval scale, such as Question #11: *"Please indicate approximately what percent of your total literacy education budget and in-kind contributions comes from the sources listed."* The fourth type of survey item used is an open-ended question, such as Question #8: *"What are the 2-3 most important qualities your company looks for in hiring trainers for your ESL literacy program?"*.

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[9] A speaker's "linguistic competence" is made up of grammatical competence (decontextualized knowledge of intonation, phonology, syntax, semantics, etc.) (Thomas, 1983).

In addition to the 19 questions of the Wright survey instrument, a section (5 questions) dealing with linguistic and cultural issues were added to identify characteristics of ESL workplace literacy programs. (Refer to Appendix C for copy of survey). Sample questions are:

Question #19 -

> Many times ESL learners are not familiar with the American culture or the workplace culture. Do you address culture in your curriculum? If so, how is it integrated in your program?

Question #17 -

> How does your program identify workers eligible for ESL instruction? (i.e. supervisors identify employees)

Phase III

During site visits to the four ESL workplace literacy programs, administrators and teachers were asked 13 open-ended questions in regard to their programs. The researcher encouraged the interviewees to expand their responses and provide examples for each question. (Refer to Appendix D for a copy of the interview guide).

In order to facilitate the examination of documents, a checklist has been developed. This list served as a facilitator for the inspection of the materials. It includes such items: highlights of program outcomes, program objectives, accomplishment of objectives, etc.

(Refer to Appendix F for copy of checklist).

DATA SOURCES

Telephone conversations

Phase I

Informal telephone conversations to thirty key people from sources such as the States' Departments of Labor and States' Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) offices were conducted in order to identify ESL workplace literacy programs within the states of Illinois and Indiana. There is currently no available listing. Notes were taken during these conversations in order to analyze the information.

Phase II

Telephone conversations were conducted with 6-8 program directors as potential candidates for selection as one of the four effective programs for site visits. The conversations focused on program enrollment, participant achievement, curriculum offerings, and the nature and extent of the business/labor union role in developing and operating the program. Conversations lasted approximately 25 minutes.

Phase III

Interviews With Project Directors and Teachers

Interviews were conducted with the administrators and teachers at the four selected ESL workplace literacy programs. These interviews lasted 45-60 minutes. Administrators and teachers were asked to explain their programs with more detail.

Examination of Documents

A close examination of the pertinent documents found in the four ESL workplace literacy programs was performed. Such documents included but were not limited to the following: training manuals, teaching materials, handbooks, and reports. Permission was requested in order to photocopy materials for further analysis.

Classroom Observations

The researcher observed classes to determine the level of instruction, methods and approaches utilized in the classrooms. Also, the researcher compared the information given by administrators to determine if this was taking place in the classes. Notes guided by the conceptual framework of the study were taken during these observations.

PROCEDURES

PHASE I

Phase I solicits the identification of ESL workplace literacy programs within the states of Illinois and Indiana. This took place by informal telephone calls to key people from sources such as the States Departments of Labor, States Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) offices, Private Industry Councils, States Departments of Education (including the following divisions: Adult Basic Education, Literacy/Workplace Literacy, and Vocational offices), Ivy Tech, community colleges, specialists in the field; advertisements placed in the Business Council for Effective Literacy Newsletter and the National Coalition for Vocational Education for Limited English Speakers Newsletter; and other contacts/networks which might be identified. Approximately 30 persons were contacted with the calls lasting about 10 minutes. (Refer to Instruments section and Appendix B for guide to questions).

PHASE II

During *Phase II*, a pre-pilot of the survey instruments was conducted and analyzed to establish content validity. The survey instruments were administered to and examined by 10 specialists in adult education/ESL workplace literacy in Indiana and Illinois. These experts were asked to evaluate the design, content, and format of the research instruments. It was estimated that the survey instruments would take about 20 minutes to complete. Informal telephone discussions with these experts were also scheduled to identify and modify survey instruments. After the instruments were validated, the workplace survey questionnaire was directed to 22 identified teachers and human resources development professionals whose companies operate ESL workplace literacy programs in Indiana and Illinois. This phase solicited an in-depth examination of identified ESL workplace literacy programs. Survey questions solicited information in the following areas: examination of the curriculum materials; issues of program design, assessment and evaluation procedures; short and long term goals of the program; availability of the programs; priorities of the program; placement procedures; classroom structure; staffing; site selection for instruction; student recruitment; incentive procedures; population targeted; support services; funding/cost factors; importance of need; specific needs of industry addressed; evaluation; and assessment. Each respondent was: mailed a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study; asked to complete the accompanying questionnaire and return it (within 2 weeks) in the self-addressed, stamped envelop provided. To identify which organizations responded, all surveys were serially pre-coded 1 to 22 on the last page of the instrument.

Three weeks after the initial contact, a follow-up telephone call was made to the non-respondents appealing to them to complete the survey. This questionnaire took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Twenty of the survey questionnaries were completed and returned to the researcher. Gathering this information took approximately 4

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weeks. (Refer to Appendix C for survey instrument).

PHASE III

From the surveyed programs, 6-8 ESL workplace literacy programs were closely investigated. Telephone conversations were conducted with identified program directors in order to obtain additional data prior to the selection of four effective programs for site visits. The conversations focused on program enrollment, participant achievement, curriculum offerings, and the nature and extent of the business/labor union role in developing and operating the program. (Refer to pp. 56-57 and Appendix A for additional information on criteria for site selection).

The specific purpose of site visits to the four programs was to observe how programs operate and to talk with key individuals involved in the operation of ESL workplace literacy programs. Administrators and teachers were asked to explain their programs with more detail. Features of the programs, such as critical components as viewed from their experience, were discussed. (See Appendix D for a copy of the Interview Guide).

Scholars such as Kerlinger, Guba and Lincoln have maintained the value of interviews for gathering data. Kerlinger (1973) points "The interview is perhaps the most ubiquitous method of obtaining information ... used in all kind of practical situations" (p.439) and is currently used in a systematic way for field research. Interviews allow one to see a situation from another's viewpoint and to interpret what is happening from that individual's experiential and value framework. The researcher used a structured interview guide with "open-ended" questions. These open-ended questions provide a frame of reference for the interviewee while at the same time allowing for freedom of expression.

DATA ANALYSIS

Survey Data

The data collected throughout these phases were discussed by themes (from the developed framework) in the form of case studies. Categories with comments and information with regard to the identification of the administrative and instructional practices was reviewed.

The items on the survey instrument were analyzed according to the type of question. For example, items with multiple choice responses, such as question #1 (How long has your program existed?) were analyzed by utilizing percent frequencies. For items with a response scale, such as question #4 (There are many reasons why companies are involved in ESL literacy education. Please rate the importance of the following reasons by checking one response for each reason listed below.), frequencies and means will be calculated and reported. For items which use an interval scale, such as question #6 (Please indicate approximately what percent of your total literacy education budget and in-kind contributions comes from the sources listed), standard deviations were used to test the amount of variability in responses. For items with open-ended questions, such as question #15 (How does your program identify workers eligible for ESL instruction?), responses were transcribed and data were qualitatively analyzed and presented.

In order to validate that the information gathered for the four case studies was accurate, program directors were given an opportunity to examine the data. For instance, all of the sites were identified by their manufacturing products (i.e., Cosmetics). However, one of the programs requested a different name to be used in order to maintain anonimity.

On-Site Data

From the information gathered during the interviews, the researcher noted key ideas of themes. To determine overall themes (in addition to those from the framework) in the data, the researcher analyzed ideas and made tentative headings for possible inclusion in the findings. Actual comments made by interviewees were included in the findings to provide more detailed information for the reader.

By carefully analyzing these data, the researcher was able to draw conclusions and make recommendations in order to better understand the current programs and perceived needs of the ESL population. Information about existing ESL workplace literacy programs and employees will be useful for adult basic educators developing such programs. Therefore, existing programs can improve or adjust their procedures by examining what other programs are doing.

HYPOTHETICAL PROGRAM

In order to facilitate the reader's understanding of ESL workplace literacy programs, a hypothetical ideal program will be described. Such a program would display the following characteristics:

1. Active and ongoing involvement by partner involvement (consisting of community members, teachers, administrators, and learners) in the community outreach, support system, program design, needs assessment, literacy task analysis, staff development, and problems encountered in the program.
2. Active and ongoing review and response by partner involvement to the program design, approaches and methods for instruction, curriculum, program evaluation and solutions to encountered problems.

Two questions need to be considered before implementing an ESL workplace literacy program:

- To what extent are partners involved in the programs?
- To what extent are the programs linked to the employees' jobs?

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This study of ESL workplace literacy programs in the Midwest consisted of three phases. *Phase I* solicited the identification of ESL workplace literacy programs within segments of the Midwest (the states of Illinois and Indiana). *Phase II* established content validity of the survey instrument. During this phase, the survey was directed to 22 identified teachers and/or human resources development professionals whose companies operate ESL workplace literacy programs in segments of the Midwest.

PHASE III involved an in-depth investigation of four ESL workplace literacy programs. Telephone conversations and on-site interviews were conducted with program directors and teachers in order to obtain additional data in regard to the programs. This chapter reports the findings of the three phases.

Phase I

This phase solicited the identification of ESL workplace literacy programs within the states of Illinois and Indiana. This procedure was accomplished by conducting telephone calls with key officials from a variety of sources (i.e., the State Departments of Labor, State Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) offices, Private Industry Councils, State Departments of Education, etc.). Twenty-two programs were identified as being ESL workplace literacy programs.

Phase II

During *Phase II* a pre-pilot of the survey instruments was conducted to establish content validity. The survey instrument was given to approximately 10 specialists in adult education/ESL workplace literacy in Indiana and Illinois. After content validity was established, the survey instrument was directed to 22 identified teachers and/or human resources development professionals whose companies operate ESL workplace literacy programs. Twenty programs completed and returned the survey questionnaire.

FINDINGS CONCERNING ESL WORKPLACE LITERACY PROGRAMS

Question 1: *How long has your program existed?*

Respondents were asked to specify how long their program had existed. The overall mean was 8.03 years with a range of 1.5 to 27 years of existence. The data demonstrate that the majority of the programs have lasted less than 4 years. Table 1 provides additional data such as the standard deviation, the minimum and the maximum amount of program existence.

Table 1 Years program has existed (n=20)

	YEARS			
Number of respondents	**Mean**	**SD**	**Min.**	**Max.**
20	8.03	7.02	1.5	27

Question 2: ***When is the program offered?***

Seventeen respondents (85%) replied that their programs were offered both during work hours and during non-work hours. Another 10% of the respondents indicated that their programs were only offered during work hours. Table 2 provides these data.

Table 2 Program offered (n=20)

	n	**%**
During work hrs.	2	10.0
During Non-work hrs.	1	5.0
During both	17	85.0

Question 3: *Is your company site unionized?*

Eleven educational providers (55%) indicated "both" as some of their company sites are unionized while others are not. Only 5 respondents (25%) mentioned that their sites were solely unionized in comparison to 4 respondents (20%) who said they were not unionized.

Question 4: ***There are many reasons why companies are involved in ESL literacy education. Please rate the***

importance of the following reasons by checking one response for each reason listed below.

In this question, program directors were given a list of reasons for providing ESL workplace literacy training and asked to rate the importance of each option. This question used a five-point scale ranging from high importance (rated as 5) to not applicable (rated as 0). Frequencies and means are depicted for each of the reasons in Table 3. The most observable finding is that 16 respondents (84.2%), ranked *Basic language/communication skills* as the most important reason for providing ESL literacy education while the least important reason is *Commitment to economic development* with 8 respondents (44.4%).

In addition, respondents rated the following reasons as between the range of 3 (important) to 4 (high importance)[10]: *Improve organizational productivity (3.5), Increase communication among employees (3.3), Update basic skills (3.3), Improve response to technological advances (3.1), Reduce accidents (2.9), and Reduce losses (2.8).* Between the range of 2.5 (moderate importance) and below, respondents indicated: *Increase pools of promotable employees (2.4), Promote personal well-being of employees (2.3), Cross-training (2.3), Reduce training time (2.2), Practice corporate responsibility (2.1), Improve customer relations (2.1).*

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[10] The mean averages are provided in parenthesis.

Table 3: Rank Order Listing of Reasons for Offering ESL Literacy Education (n=20)

	FREQUENCIES											
	(0)		(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)			
REASON	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	Scale Mean	Scale SD
Impr. bas. lang./comm. skills	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	15.0	17	85.0	3.9	0.1
Impr. org. productivity	0	0	0	0	2	10.0	6	30.0	12	60.0	3.5	0.7
Incr. comm. among employees	0	0	0	0	4	20.0	6	30.0	10	50.0	3.3	0.8
Impr. or update bas. skills	0	0	1	5.0	1	5.0	9	45.0	9	45.0	3.3	0.8
Impr. resp. tech. advances	0	0	2	10.0	3	15.0	7	35.0	8	40.0	3.1	1.0
Reduce accidents/safety	0	0	1	5.0	5	25.0	9	45.0	5	25.0	2.9	0.9
Reduce losses	0	0	0	0	9	45.0	6	30.0	5	25.0	2.8	0.8
Incr. promotability	1	5.0	3	15.0	6	30.0	7	35.0	3	15.0	2.4	1.1
Prom. personal well-being	0	0	4	20.0	9	45.0	5	25.0	2	10.0	2.3	0.9
Cross-training	2	10.0	1	5.0	9	45.0	6	30.0	2	10.0	2.3	1.1
Reduce training time	1	5.0	4	20.0	8	40.0	5	25.0	2	10.0	2.2	1.0
Practice corp. responsibility	0	0	6	30.0	9	45.0	3	15.0	2	10.0	2.1	1.0
Impr. customer relations	2	10.0	6	30.0	5	25.0	3	15.0	4	20.0	2.1	1.3
Commitment economic dev.	1	5.3	8	42.1	5	26.3	4	21.1	1	5.3	1.8	1.0

0 = N/A 1 = Low Importance 2 = Moderate Importance 3 = Important 4 = High Importance

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Question 5: ***Please list any other important reasons for your company's involvement in ESL literacy education.***

Respondents were given the opportunity to state any important reason for their company's involvement in ESL literacy education. Only seven respondents provided answers to this question. A complete list of the responses has been included in Table 4. Three respondents indicated their involvement was partly done *to meet ISO 9000*[11] *(International Standards Organization* - a requirement for global competitiveness) and *TQM (Total Quality Management requirements*. Other responses included: *improve company moral; strong commitment to education; and improve relations for employers, between employers, and between employers/supervisors.*

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[11] ISO has been adopted by 91 countries and has become the international quality system standard for manufacturing, trade, and communication industries and enables companies to compete in the global marketplace.

Table 4

Reasons for company's involvement in program (n=7)

REASONS	n
Improve international competitiveness/Meet ISO 9000 & TQM requirements	2
Workforce restructuring	1
Improve conversational and linear measurement skills of temporary workers for permanent hire	1
Improve relations for employees, among workers, and between employees and supervisors	1
Company morale	1
Strong commitment to education	1
Commitment to the company's neighborhood residents who are employees	1

Question 6: ***Which statement best describes participation in your literacy program?***

Ten respondents (50%) depicted participation in their literacy programs as being *voluntary for some employees and mandatory for others*. Nine respondents (45%) mentioned that participation in the literacy program was *voluntary*. Only 1 respondent (5%) indicated that the program was *mandatory*.

Question 7: ***From what source does your company recruit trainers for your ESL literacy program?***

Recruiting trainers for ESL literacy programs takes place *outside the company* for 14 respondents (70%), whereas 6 respondents (30%) mentioned that they recruit from *both*, inside and outside the company. No one reported solely recruiting from *inside the company.*

Question 8: ***What are the 2-3 most important qualities your company looks for in hiring trainers for your ESL literacy program?***

This was an open-ended question asking respondents to list those qualities which are important for hiring their ESL trainers. All twenty programs responded to this question. Answers were classified into four categories that comprise the most important qualities. Table 5 summarizes responses. A full listing is presented in Appendix E-1. An analysis of responses shows that *experience* is the most important quality for hiring ESL trainers as it was identified in 19 occasions, *educational background* identified by 10 respondents, *interpersonal skills and abilities* identified by 13 respondents, and *general skills* (such as *commitment to program expectation* and *willingness to work in a factory classroom environment*) identified by 7 respondents. The category *interpersonal skills and abilities* included such items as: *ability to establish rapport, personal touch, flexibility, creativity,* and *sensitivity to the workplace.*

Table 5

Important qualities for hiring ESL literacy trainers (n=20)

CATEGORIES	n
Experience	19
Educational background	10
Interpersonal skills and abilities	13
General skills	7

Question 9: ***What type of special training is provided for your ESL literacy trainers?***

In this section, respondents were asked about the type of training provided for their ESL literacy trainers by being given three choices (pre-service, in-service, none) and an open-ended "other" choice. Responses show that 15 respondents (75%) offer *in-service*, 12 respondents (60%) offer *pre-service* and 2 respondents (10%) do not offer any special training. In addition, 6 respondents (30%) identified other types of special training. Some examples of training include: *monthly training sponsored by the program, internship and shadowing, interactive workshops every 2 months, on-going staff meeting and reflection on practices*, and *on-going mentoring*. A complete list is presented in Appendix E-2.

Question 10: ***What specific qualifications are required of your ESL literacy trainers?***

For this question, respondents were given a choice of 4 specific qualifications (ESL state certification, certification to teach reading, certification to teach adults, years of teaching experience with an opportunity to specify the years) and an open-ended "other" choice. Out of 20 respondents, 14 (70%) identified *years of teaching experience* as a requirement for their ESL literacy trainers. The mean for the years of teaching experience is 2.9 years. Only 1 (5%) respondent indicated that *certification in ESL, teaching adults and teaching reading* was a requirement for their trainers. However, nine respondents (45%) noted requiring other types of qualifications such as: *experience in workplace training, completion of workshops in adult ESL/basic skills*, and *interpersonal skills*. A list of the variety of requirements is provided in Appendix E-3.

Question 11: ***Please indicate approximately what percent of your total literacy education budget and in-kind contributions comes from the source listed.***

Respondents were given a choice of 9 funding sources including an open-ended "other" choice. When asked about the sources of funds for operating budgets for the literacy education programs, 89.5% of the respondents reported that their *companies pay for some of the program*. Thirteen out of 19 respondents indicated that half or more of their funds come from the *company budget*. In addition, 9 out of 19 respondents mentioned that their companies provide 70% or more of their funds for providing an ESL literacy program. In a third of these 19 cases (31.6%), the companies provide 100% of funds for the budget. Overall, an average of 60% of the funds are provided by the company.

Union contributions, employee fees and local government funds were not identified as any part of the operating budgets for responding literacy programs. However, 47.4% of the respondents (with an average of 16.6% of their total funds) indicated that their programs are supported by state funds, while 31.6% of the respondents (with an average of 17.6% of their total funds) have money allocated from federal funds. One respondent (5.3%) indicated "*other*" as their budget was sponsored by a literacy challenge from the company, United Parcel Service. Means and standard deviations are presented on these data in Table 6.

Table 6

Percentages of operating budgets for programs (n=19)

SOURCE	MEAN	SD	MIN.	MAX.
Company budget	60.0	36.2	0.0	100.0
Federal funds	17.6	30.2	0.0	100.0
State funds	16.6	20.4	0.0	50.0
Other	5.3	22.9	0.0	100.0
Educational institutions	1.3	4.7	0.0	20.0
Volunteer	0.8	2.5	0.0	10.0
Local government funds	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Employee fees	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Union contributions	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Question 12: ***Which instructional and support services are available to participants in your program?***

Respondents were given eight choices of services including an open-ended "other" option. Seventeen out of 20 respondents (85%) reported providing *books and materials for home study*. In contrast, no program reported providing *transportation to and from off-site classes*. Half or more responding programs reported these services: *books and materials, educational counseling, learning diagnosis*, and *computer assisted instruction*. Other present but less common features include: *child care while in class* and *personal counseling*. However, three respondents (15%) mentioned that they provide other instructional and support services such as *transportation stipend, child care stipend* and *individual tutoring* in order to help learner catch up to the next available class level. (See Appendix E-4 for a complete list). The findings are presented on Table 7.

Table 7

Instructional and support services provided to participants

TYPE OF SERVICE	n	%
Books and materials	17	85.0
Educational counseling	14	70.0
Learning diagnosis	11	55.0
Computer assisted instruction	10	50.0
Child care while in class (n=19)	3	15.8
Personal counseling	3	15.0
Other	3	15.0
Transportation (n=18)	18	100.0

*** Note (n=20) unless otherwise indicated**

Question 13: ***Please rate the effectiveness of the following strategies for recruiting prospective ESL program participants.***

Respondents were given a list of 15 strategies for recruiting prospective participants and asked to rate the effectiveness of each option using a five-point scale ranging from never used (0) to very effective (4). Table 8 gives detailed responses. In overall ratings, *personal contacts* were rated as effective (mean rating 3.5). Other effective strategies include: *referrals from other workers*

(3.3), *counseling interviews with individual employees* (2.8), *employee meetings* (2.7), and *presentations by educators at union and staff meetings* (2.6). Among the strategies judged least effective were: *description of program in employee handbook* (0.6), *public address system announcements* (0.6), and *brochures or bulletins mailed to employee's home* (0.9). Table 8 summarizes the findings.

Table 8: Effectiveness of strategies for recruiting prospective participants

REASON	FREQUENCIES (0) n	%	(1) n	%	(2) n	%	(3) n	%	(4) n	%	Scale Mean	Scale SD
Personal contacts	1	5.0	0	0	1	5.0	4	20.0	14	70.0	3.5	1.0
Referrals from other workers	1	5.0	0	0	2	10.0	7	35.0	10	50.0	3.3	1.0
Counseling interviews w/employees	4	20.0	0	0	1	5.0	7	35.0	8	40.0	2.8	1.5
Employee meetings (n=19)	2	10.5	0	0	5	26.3	6	31.6	6	31.6	2.7	1.2
Present. at union/staff meetings	3	15.0	0	0	3	15.0	10	50.0	4	20.0	2.6	1.3
Articles comp. newsletters (n=19)	1	5.3	3	15.8	9	47.4	4	21.1	2	10.5	2.2	1.0
Special exhibits (n=19)	3	15.8	3	15.8	8	42.1	3	15.8	2	10.5	1.9	1.2
Orient./train. for empl. (n=19)	5	26.3	2	10.5	6	31.6	2	10.5	4	21.1	1.9	1.5
Open-house (n=18)	5	27.8	0	0	7	38.9	4	22.2	2	11.1	1.9	1.4
Info. thru unions (n=18)	4	22.2	2	11.1	7	38.9	4	22.2	1	5.6	1.8	1.2
Notices on bulletin boards	1	5.0	6	30.0	11	55.0	2	10.0	0	0	1.7	0.7
Info. in paycheck envelope (n=19)	4	21.1	2	10.5	11	57.9	0	0	2	10.5	1.7	1.2
Brochures (n=19)	9	47.4	3	15.8	7	36.8	0	0	0	0	0.9	0.9
Public address announce. (n=19)	13	68.4	3	15.8	1	5.3	2	10.5	0	0	0.6	1.0
Prog. descr. on handbook (n=19)	11	57.9	5	26.3	3	15.8	0	0	0	0	0.6	0.8

0 = N/A 1 = Low Importance 2 = Moderate Importance 3 = Important 4 = High Importance

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Question 14: ***Please list any other effective strategies used to recruit prospective participants for your ESL literacy program.***

In this section, participants were given the opportunity to list other effective strategies utilized in their programs. Ten respondents replied to this question, providing nine strategies. Among the most effective were *"word of mouth" by other satisfied students* (listed by 2 respondents) and a *steering committee for planning* (listed by 2 respondents). Appendix E-5 shows a list of other effective strategies to recruit participants into their programs.

Question 15: ***What incentives are offered to employees for participating in your ESL literacy program?***

In this question, respondents were given a list of nine choices and asked to identify all incentives which they offer to encourage participation in their program. Most respondents checked several incentives. The results presented in Table 9 demonstrate that *one half release time* is offered to employees by 16 respondents (80.0%), *company certification of completion* offered by 14 respondents (70.0%), *100% release time* offered by 12 respondents (60.0%), and potential for promotion offered by 10 respondents (50.0%). Other incentives were listed by 4 respondents (20.0%), among these were: *recognition ceremony,* *feature workers in company's newsletter*, and *gift certificates*. A complete list is provided in Appendix E-6. Only 1 respondent (5.0%) noted *no direct incentives* are used for participation in their program.

Table 9

Incentives for participation in program (n=20)

TYPE OF INCENTIVE	n	%
One-half release time	16	80.0
Company certification of completion	14	70.0
100% release time	12	60.0
Potential for promotion	10	50.0
Bonuses	5	25.0
Tuition reimbursement	5	25.0
Other	4	20.0
Raises	3	15.0
No direct incentives	1	5.0

Question 16: ***How does your program identify workers eligible for ESL instruction?***

This was an open-ended question asking respondents to specify the methods utilized by their programs to identify workers eligible for ESL instruction. Twenty responded to this question. Appendix E-7 provides a complete list of their responses. The most frequently used method of identifying prospective program participants is *supervisors identify employees* as indicated by 10 respondents (50%). *Self-identification* was also frequently utilized as mentioned by 8 respondents (40.0%). Six respondents (30%) identified *assessments company-wide of all production employees* as another method for identification.

Question 17: ***What major obstacles or problems has your company's ESL literacy program experienced?***

This open-end question solicited qualitative data by asking the respondents to identify the major obstacles or problems that the company's ESL literacy program had confronted (in both design and delivery). Appendix E-8 presents the responses of twenty programs. Six respondents identified the two following obstacles or problems:

1) *Management's cooperation to release employees from their jobs to attend class;*

2) *Multi-level classes.*

Other obstacles described include: *family and personal time constraints* (i.e. second jobs, child care concerns) identified by 5 respondents, *transportation* (many workers van pool to worksite) identified by 4 respondents, and *long term funding* identified by 4 respondents.

Question 18: ***Do you have a process for assessing or measuring the job related language and literacy needs of your ESL employees? If so, please describe it.***

This open-ended question solicited information in regard to the assessment of ESL workers' needs. Three respondents (15.0%) indicated that no process was used for assessing or measuring the job related language and literacy needs of ESL employees. In contrast, 17 respondents (85.0%) stated that they utilized some process. Six out of 17 respondents indicated that they perform a needs assessment, a job analysis and a task analysis. The majority of the ESL literacy programs allow the educational provider to test the employees by administering some type of standardized test such as BEST (Basic English Skills Test), CELSA (Combined English Language Skills in a Reading Context), or SORT (Slosson Oral Reading Test). Other programs combine some parts of these tests with oral interviews dealing with job and personal information. Yet others design a customized workplace test for a particular industry. Appendix E-9 provides a list of the types of assessment processes which are used in the programs.

Question 19: ***Do you address culture in your curriculum? If so, how is it integrated in your program?***

Two respondents (10.0%) mentioned that they do not address culture in their curriculum, whereas 18 respondents (90.0%) indicated that they did address it. In addition, respondents were asked to provide examples. Seventeen out of 18 respondents explained how culture was integrated into the program. Of these 17, eight respondents mentioned that *culture was addressed in an informal way throughout the curriculum* (i.e. Teacher addresses culture as questions are asked by the students; Culture is addressed through role-plays and discussions as it relates to the competency being taught). Five respondents, however, noted that *cultural issues were integrated into the regular job-specific curriculum.* Elicited examples included: *reporting absences, timeliness, eye contact, business practices,* and *work expectations.* Two respondents mentioned that *life skills lessons were used to make connections into related work skills* (i.e. Find locations in community in order to find locations in the factory). Appendix E-10 provides a list of the ways culture was reportedly integrated into programs.

Question 20: ***Are there any special adjustments performed in the program when the ESL population is multi-ethnic?***

Nine respondents (50.0%) out of 18 answered that they did not perform any special adjustments in the program when the ESL population was multi-ethnic. Although the other half of the respondents (50.0%) indicated performing special adjustments in their programs, only six respondents provided examples such as: *extra in-class or tutoring assistance, an aide is bilingual,* and *lessons elicit information on their home cultures.* A close analysis of these responses indicates that truly there are no differences between multi-ethnic vs. single ethnic classrooms. The examples provided in these responses were mentioned by directors as being utilized in both multi-ethnic and single ethnic classrooms (i.e. Most ESL instructors in the programs are bilingual). Appendix E-11 provides the different types of adjustments specified by the respondents.

Question 21: *Different companies judge success of their programs in a variety of ways. Please rate the effectiveness of the following in reflecting the success of your program by checking one response for each outcome listed below.*

In this question, respondents were given a list of eight outcomes to determine program success and asked to rate the effectiveness of each option within their program. The scale for rating ranged from "never used" (0) to "very effective" (4). The results in Table 10 show that 9 respondents (50.0%) out of 18, identified *improved interpersonal relations in the company* (mean rating 3.4) and *participant performance on the job* (mean rating 3.2) as effective methods to determine success of the program. From the list we can also gather that *participant learning gains, participant satisfaction, increased efficiency in the company, increased productivity, increased self-esteem,* and *promotability* are also considered to be effective methods for a successful program as they have an estimated mean quite close to the "effective" rating of 3. Ratings for these indicators ranged from 2.7 to 3.1.

Table 10

Effectiveness of methods to evaluate success of ESL workplace literacy programs

FREQUENCIES

METHOD	(0)		(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		Scale Mean	Scale SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Impr. interp. relations in comp.	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	11.1	7	38.9	9	50.0	3.4	0.7
Part. on job performance	1	5.6	0	0.0	2	11.1	6	33.3	9	50.0	3.2	1.1
Part. learning gains (n=19)	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	21.1	7	36.8	8	42.1	3.2	0.8
Part. satisfaction (n=20)	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	10.0	12	60.0	6	30.0	3.2	0.6
Incr. efficiency in comp.	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	27.8	6	33.3	7	38.9	3.1	0.8
Incr. productivity in comp.	1	5.6	0	0.0	5	27.8	4	22.2	8	44.4	3.0	1.1
Incr. self-esteem	1	5.6	0	0.0	3	16.7	9	50.0	5	27.8	2.9	1.0
Promotability (n=19)	2	10.5	0	0.0	6	31.6	4	21.1	7	36.8	2.7	1.3

0 = N/A 1 = Low Importance 2 = Moderate Importance 3 = Important 4 = High Importance

*Note: (n=18) unless otherwise indicated

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Question 22: ***Please list any other indicators of program effectiveness used in your program.***

Respondents were asked to list any other indicators of program effectiveness used in their program. A variety of indicators were provided by ten respondents. A close analysis of the indicators suggests three themes:

1) Evaluations - i.e. surveys administered to workers; supervisor's survey with observations of students; students' evaluation results; post-tests;

2) Self-improvement - i.e. improved morale; students share ideas with other workers/supervisors; enrollment in a third term; students communicate helpfulness of class to others;

3) Improved company performance - reduced tardiness; reduced absenteeism; reduced scrap; increased application for promotion.

Appendix E-12 provides all the indicators mentioned by the programs.

Question 23: ***Which of the listed approaches typifies your program?***

For this question, respondents were given a list of eight literacy and language teaching approaches ranging from whole language to a mixed or eclectic approach and asked to indicate which ones typified their program. The results in Table 11 show that 15 respondents (75.0%) labeled *functional* *approach* as being representative of their program. In addition, at least half or more of the programs indicated the use of the *communicative, participatory,* and *eclectic approaches*. Only 1 program (5.0%0 indicated the use of the *natural approach.* Two respondents (10.0%), however, mentioned that their program was typified by other approaches. They listed: *prescriptive tutorial model, competency-based, multiple intelligence, Feuerstein's instrumental enrichment and mediated learning*. In some ways this information is deceptive since many approaches employ comparable methods and activities.

Table 11

Approaches typifying ESL workplace literacy programs (n=20)

APPROACHES	n	%
Functional: Emphasizes life skills needed in everyday life and at the workplace	15	75.0
Communicative: Emphasizes cultural and linguistic appropriateness needed to communicate with other language users	11	55.0
Participatory: Emphasizes shared decision making and examines critical issues critical to learners' lives	11	55.0
Eclectic: Emphasizes a combination of approaches chosen by the teacher	10	50.0
Whole language: Emphasizes that language learning and teaching proceed from whole to part; materials are relevant to learners' lives and interests	9	45.0
Language experience: Emphasizes the use of the learner's language as a basis for literacy development	6	30.0
Ethnographic: Emphasizes the socio-cultural dimensions of literacy	2	10.0
Other	2	10.0
Natural: Emphasizes that language is learned in a natural way, parallel to the way children learn their first language	1	5.0

Question 24: ***If there are any features of your program which have not been covered above and you feel are important, please comment below.***

The final question on the survey permitted respondents to make any additional comments regarding their ESL workplace literacy programs which were not previously covered. Only five respondents addressed this particular question. The majority of the responses dealt with the general theme of the *program's partnership*. Exemplary comments included: *"Program is effective because it attempts to integrate all stakeholders at all levels of the program operations;" "Workplace programs require flexibility depending upon the company's goals and upon the characteristics of the participants."* A full listing of these features is presented in Appendix E-13.

Summary of Questionnaire:

Based on the information gathered from the survey questionnaires, ESL workplace literacy programs are relatively new and can be depicted by the following general characteristics:

Program Design Features

- A median of five years for program existence;
- Offered both *during work hours and during non-work hours;*
- A substantial number of company sites are *unionized;*
- *Improving Basic language/communication skills* is the most important reason for providing ESL literacy education;
- An average of *60% of the budget funds* for ESL workplace literacy programs are *provided by the company;*

Recruitment and Selection of Program Participants

- *Personal contacts* were rated as an effective strategy to recruit prospective participants, while books and materials for home study are a common instructional support service available to ESL employees;

- *Supervisors identify* prospective program participants;
- Majority of the programs allow the educational provider to test employees by *administering some type of standardized test* such as BEST (Basic English Skills Test), CELSA (Combined English Language Skills in a Reading Context), or SORT (Slosson Oral Reading Test);

Participation

- Half of the respondents indicated that *participation in programs is voluntary for some employees and mandatory for others*;
- 80% of the respondents noted that *one-half release time* is offered to employees as an incentive to encourage participation in the program;

Recruitment and Selection of Trainers

- ESL literacy programs tend to recruit trainers *from outside the company*;
- Most important qualities for hiring ESL trainers are *teaching experience* and *interpersonal skills and abilities* (i.e., creativity and ability to establish rapport);
- Most respondents indicated an average of *three years of teaching experience* as a requirement for their ESL literacy trainers;
- 75% percent of the educational providers offer *in-service training* to their ESL trainers (i.e. monthly training, internship and shadowing, interactive workshops);

Program Design

- Half of the respondents noted that *special adjustments are performed* for a multi-ethnic population; however, only about one-third provided examples (i.e. extra in-class or tutoring assistance, a bilingual aide);
- *Culture is usually addressed in an informal way* throughout the curriculum;
- *Functional approach* (emphasizes life skills needed in every day life and at workplace) typifies most programs;

Program Success

- Two obstacles/problems associated with many programs are: *having employees released from jobs to attend class* and *providing for multi-level classes;*
- *Improved interpersonal relations in the company* and *participant performance on the job* are considered to be effective methods to determine success of program.

PHASE III

This phase involved a close investigation of four ESL workplace literacy programs. The sites were selected by a detailed process. First, the educational provider had to possess the skills to develop and deliver a successful workplace literacy program. Next, the Illinois State Literacy Resource Center was consulted to determine the effectiveness of the program. Through telephone conversations, the Director of the Center and the Workplace Coordinator shared the key features necessary for an educational provider to deliver a successful program:

- trained about corporate culture (experience about what the company does and contacts company personnel, including labor union and human resources)
- conducts a needs assessment
- performs an evaluation (a pre- and post-test; TABE usually is used; tied to program goals; reports back to workers/union/company)
- provides staff development (basic skills training on-site and off-site)
- curriculum development tailored to the worksite

Thus, an educational provider was recognized as being effective if it had successfully accomplished the above features (Refer to Appendix A-1 for initial criteria requirements).

In addition to these attributes and recommendations by the staff of the Illinois Literacy Resource Center, the four sites were selected to reflect variation in at least two or more of the following factors: (Refer to Appendix A-2 for additional criteria requirements).

- Presence of a diverse ESL (multi-ethnic) population
- Presence of functional context literacy training
- Types of educational service providers (i.e., state departments of education, community based organization, community colleges, universities, private companies)
- Types of business partners (i.e., mid-size and large businesses, manufacturing and service sector businesses)
- Labor union involvement

Descriptions of Sites and Participants

Each site was visited at least once and some were visited a second time. The extent of the visits varied from site to site. For instance, some sites provided a company tour, whereas others only supplied program descriptions. During each visit, however, the researcher was able to observe class instruction, interview the teacher and/or the program director, and analyze program and instructional documents. Furthermore, telephone interviews were conducted with all program directors at all sites.

Site #1 - Cosmetics Company

This cosmetics company with approximately 2,500 employees is located in a major metropolitan area of Illinois. The area surrounding the factory is rich with ethnicity. The main street, where Cosmetics is situated, is heavily traveled. Driving through the streets one noticed the different ethnic cafeterias and small shops with signs in Spanish and Asian languages. This area, however, is considered a high crime one.

For the purposes of this study, this company will be referred to as "Cosmetics." Many employees are immigrants or from non-English cultures (i.e. Hispanics, Poles, Russians and Asians). The company has an Adult Learning Center where a variety of classes are offered. This particular company has developed a partnership with a local university. Consequently, the director of Cosmetics' Adult Learning Center is an employee of the local university. She has served on a contract basis as the director for the past five years. During the first site visit, a site tour was given by the program director. As one walked through the production line, one was able to observe a multi-ethnic population with several languages being spoken by the employees.

Students

Those students enrolled in ESL courses vary in educational background which ranges from little schooling to college level. However, most students enrolled were undereducated. Ages ranged from late twenties to fifties with most in the middle range.

Instructional Setting

Cosmetics has an Adult Learning Center which is located in one of the main buildings of the factory. The area is conveniently located so the employees can easily access it. The central location is particularly helpful as employees are released half-time from production lines in order to attend classes offered at the Center. The classrooms are also located adjacent to the Center. This program has two teachers who design and provide instruction.

Class sizes vary but each course is limited to 15 students. The teacher informed the researcher that typically only ten students are enrolled throughout the sessions. Courses last ten weeks. Students meet twice a week and two hours per session for a total of 40 hours of training. There are two medium-sized rooms and a large room which are utilized as classrooms.

Class Observation

The researcher was allowed to observe an intermediate (level III) ESL class. The room was large consisting of three tables which had been placed together in the shape of the "letter U." There were ten students (three Asian men, one Polish man, two Polish women, and four Hispanic women). All of the students were sitting around the table facing one another. Although the employees were sitting next to one another, they were sitting next to a classmate with the same ethnic background speaking in their native language with some code-switching being overheard. Interestingly, the Asian men were sitting together in one side of the table followed by the Polish man and the Polish women and on the opposite side of the table were the Hispanic women. This was their first day of classes. The class started sharply at 1:00 p.m. and ended by 3:00 p.m.

The class began with the teacher introducing herself and telling a bit about the course's goals. Afterwards the students were asked to introduce themselves. The first activity she utilized was to have the students write their names in a piece of paper. They were then told to fold the paper in half and place it in the table directly in front of them. This helped the teacher and classmates to remember each others' names.

Following this activity, students played a game in the form of a questionnaire. Students were given a piece of paper with certain phrases such as: Likes to read poems; Likes to exercise; Has a pet. Learners circulated around the classroom asking each other questions in order to find out the answers. Students seemed to enjoy this exercise as they were all actively participating in English. Students were asked to share their answers. As a follow-up the teacher asked the students to elaborate in their answers. For example, "What kind of pet do you have? Does anyone else have a cat? Do you like cats?" Overall, the activity lasted approximately thirty-five minutes.

Another activity utilized was a dictation. The teacher read a paragraph about Michael Jordan playing basketball. Everyone appeared to know him since he was such a popular celebrity in this Illinois metropolitan city. After the dictation, the teacher handed copies of the paragraph and green pens for the students to correct spelling and capitalization errors. This lasted approximately fifteen minutes.

The teacher proceeded with this activity by having the students change the paragraph into different tenses. The teacher asked: "How do we change the paragraph in the past as if it had happened yesterday? The first sentence would be..." Students as a group completed the sentence aloud. Several students were asked to continue changing the sentence into the past tense. This was then followed by changing the paragraph into the future. For homework, the students were told to change the paragraph into the present progressive tense.

Another activity consisted of students working with partners. However, students could not pair up with someone

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who spoke their same native language. The activity involved several cards with different written lines. Students had to make a story out of the cards by placing them in the correct order. This appeared to be a challenging exercise as they requested the teacher's assistance several times. Pairwork lasted close to ten minutes with an additional ten minutes for discussion. Several groups did not get the sequence of the story correctly.

Site #2 - Plastics Company

This manufacturing company produces plastic infection molded lawn products and is located in the outskirts of a metropolitan city in Illinois. This company will be referred to as "Plastics." The company has a partnership with a university and a textiles labor union.

The program is supported by a grant from the U.S. Dept. of Education's NWLP (National Workplace Literacy Program). The program has a support network for a three year period, providing services to 1,000 workers from six partner companies and eight company sites. (Note that the educational provider for this program was designated as the grantee.)

Plastics company is one of the six partner companies. The researcher visited the company at two separate occasions. During the first site visit, a tour site was given by the project coordinator.

Students

There are 430 employees at Plastics. A survey of the employees was conducted by the educational provider revealing that 87% of their workforce had limited proficiency in English. In addition, 86% of them read below the 6th grade level (in English) and only 7% finished high school.

Overall, the workers' average level of education in their native country was only sixth grade, with many of them illiterate in their native language. It was estimated that more than 90% of the employees spoke Spanish both at home and at work. The vast majority of them are from Mexico.

Instructional Setting

Plastics has several small rooms within the factory floor which are utilized as classrooms. These rooms usually are used by management. The rooms consist of a long table with surrounding chairs. The employees are released half-time from their work shift to attend ESL classes. Classes vary in size with an average of ten to fifteen students. Courses last sixteen weeks. Students meet twice a week for an hour and a half per session for a total of 48 hours of training.

Class Observation

The researcher was able to observe two ESL classes during the site visits. The first class observed was an intermediate level ESL class, consisting of four students. The teacher asked the students in regard to several students who were absent. They stated that some employees were absent because they had not been released from the production lines for that day. The teacher later explained the situation to the researcher. She stated that this sometimes is a problem: "If the supervisor is short handed or needs the employee, he will not release him to come to class."

The four employees were all Hispanic between the ages of late 20's and mid 30's. The class started at approximately 12:30 p.m. with the teacher going over a worksheet entitled "On the Job" which students had for homework. There were only three questions which solicited information in regard to their work. The questions included: "What general job terms are used in a work setting that you are familiar with? What are the job title of some of the people who work here?" The teacher first circulated around the room and checked their answers individually. Then she proceeded by asking each student to elaborate aloud on their answers. This lasted approximately 20 minutes.

The next activity conducted was to play a questions and answers game. This consisted of information the teacher had to remember in regard to the each individual employee in the classroom. The students had to form questions about each other's job and asked the teacher for the answer. Some sample questions were: "What is Miguel's department? Who is Sergio's supervisor?" At the end of the activity, each student received a candybar for asking the questions.

Another activity utilized dealt with notecards which had questions related to the workplace. Each student received two cards. The first one was answered by him and the second one was asked to a classmate (i.e., Question: "If your boss says something and you don't hear it, what do ask?" Answer: "Can you repeat that?").

The last activity consisted of an order form for a future baby. Students had to decide what ideal characteristics would their future baby have. Some of the choices they had to make included the sex, future height/weight, I.Q., personality, profession possibilities, areas to excel. The students had to explain why they would want a baby in this manner; much disagreement among classmates was entertained. Code-switching (Spanish to English) was overheard as students discussed their answers among themselves and to the teacher. This activity was assigned as homework since it was 2:00 p.m., the end of class.

The second class observed was a beginning ESL course. This class consisted of ten students (three male and seven female) from Mexico. Class ran from 2:15 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

The first activity was a warm-up with general questions such as: "What day is today?" Following this, the teacher asked for the equivalent of question words from Spanish to English: "Qué" - What, "Quién" - Who. Some pronunciation was also discussed.

The following activity utilized was entitled "Reporting a Problem." Students were paired up and had different scenarios which had to be discussed and acted out in front of the class. For instance, a student might have a scenario which dealt with broken safety glasses. Thus, the student had to exchange the glasses for some new ones. Some students appeared hesitant to act out the scene in front of the class. Although this seemed challenging for them, they were able to communicate their ideas in English. This exercise lasted approximately 20 minutes.

Site #3 - Fuses Company

This manufacturing company produces electronic fuses. It is located in a suburban community in Illinois. This company with approximately 911 employees will be referred to as "Fuses." The company has a partnership with a local community college. The director in this program has a Master's degree in Human Resources and was a former language instructor at the college level. The ESL teacher had taught English in China for several years and was fluent in Chinese and Mandarin.

Students

The workers' average level of education in their native country was sixth grade or less, with many of them being illiterate in their native language. The workforce is diverse with the largest population being Hispanic, followed by Asian.

Instructional Setting

Fuses has several rooms situated in the center of the factory which are utilized as classrooms. This location is convenient for the employees who are released half-time from production lines to attend classes.

Class sizes vary but each course is limited to 12-15 students. Courses last eight to sixteen weeks. Director indicated that she preferred a sixteen week period as students had longer instruction. Students meet twice a week for two hours per session.

Class Observation

The researcher was allowed to observe an ESL leadership class. The room was large consisting of two long tables with chairs. There were ten students (eight Hispanics and two Filipinos). All of the students were sitting around the tables facing one another.

This class incorporated reading work-related passages followed by class discussions. There were several books and magazines which were utilized to generate discussions. An activity conducted during class required the students to work together and write a letter to the C.E.O. in regard to their dissatisfaction with the company's policies. In addition, some grammar-translation exercises were performed for homework and reviewed during class time.

Site #4 - Vans Company

This manufacturing company produces vans for the automotive sector. It is located in a suburban community in Indiana. This company with approximately 3,100 employees will be referred to as "Vans." The company has a partnership with a community based organization. The teacher of this company was the main contact for this particular investigation as she was the person in charge of the program. Although the teacher has no formal training in ESL, she has a B.A. in elementary education.

Instructional Setting

The company has a large trailer home used by management which serves as the ESL classroom. The trailer is located about 200 yards from the factory. Students participating in this program do so on their own time. Vans does not offer half-release for its employees. Note that the majority of these employees have been hired only as temporary workers. The incentive of the program is for the part-time ESL workforce to become proficient and obtain a full-time position at Vans.

Class sizes vary but each course is limited to 15 students. Classes meet twice a week for two hours per session and the training lasts four months.

Students

The majority of the students enrolled in ESL courses had little schooling. The students' ages ranged from late twenties to fifties with most in the middle range. They were all from Mexico and the vast majority had moved to this community from California. Students informed the researcher that they had friends and/or family who were working in this area. Thus, this kinship was the link for moving to the state of Indiana. Originally there were 22 ESL students in the program. During class observation, ten male students were present.

Classroom Observation

The researcher was allowed to observe a beginning ESL class. Unfortunately, there was not very much teaching during that particular session as students were taking a test to determine their progress. Only approximately 40 minutes were observed of actual class time. During that time the teacher went over some worksheets with different safety signs found in the company. For example, the signs

"Caution" and "Handle with care" were discussed. Students discussed the need to wear gloves and safety glasses since it is a safety regulation.

Data Gathering and Analysis

Data were gathered through a variety of methods including: survey instrument, telephone conversations, site visits, interviews with teachers and program directors, classroom observations, and examinations of documents. The following table provides an overview of information in regard to the sources of data collected at each site.

Table 12

Data Sources from Sites

Sources of Information	**Site #1**	**Site #2**	**Site #3**	**Site #4**
Telephone conversations	X	X	X	X
Survey instrument	X	X	X	X
Interviews with program directors	X	X	X	X
Interviews with teachers	X	X	X	X
Class observations	X	X	X	X
Curriculum materials and manuals	X	X	X	X
Evaluation materials	X	X	X	X
Program descriptions and reports	X	X	X	X
Company newsletters	X	X	X	
Pamphlet of Students' Comments	X	X		
Site tours	X	X		
Observation of recognition ceremony		X		
Staff development manuals		X		

* Site #1 = Cosmetics Company; Site #2 = Plastics Company; Site #3 = Fuses Company; Site #4 = Vans Company

Note that Site #2 (Plastics Company) provided all of the requested information. This was partly due to a grant that was given to the program by the U.S. Dept. of Education's NWLP (National Workplace Literacy Program). One of its charges was to disseminate all of their program's practices. In contrast, the other three sites were more reluctant to disclose some information in order to maintain the company's privacy.

Data were analyzed to address Goal 1 and the following research questions presented in Chapter III:

GOAL 1 - ***To describe to adult basic educators and program directors the administrative and instructional practices as well as lessons learned from these Midwestern ESL workplace literacy programs.***

Program Development

Curriculum Goals:

1. What are the goals of ESL workplace literacy programs?

Program Design:

2. What special adjustments are performed in the program when the ESL population is multi-ethnic?
3. What is the underlying philosophical orientation of the program? (i.e., common educational core; social and economic adaptation; development of cognitive and academic skills; personal relevance; social change; technological management of education)

Approaches and Methods:

4. What teaching approach is used in ESL workplace literacy programs? (i.e., communicative approach, grammar-translation, whole language)
5. What teaching methods are utilized in ESL workplace

literacy programs? (i.e., role-plays, worksheets, whole language)

6. How are cultural issues addressed in ESL workplace literacy programs?

Staff Development:

7. What special qualities and qualifications are required for teachers at ESL workplace literacy programs?
8. How do ESL workplace literacy programs train teachers and volunteers?

Assessment and Evaluation

Initial Assessment and Progress Evaluation:

9. What type of needs assessment and literacy task analyses are conducted prior to the development of the curriculum?
10. How are the ESL workplace literacy program's outcomes evaluated?
11. How does the program identify workers eligible for ESL instruction? (ex. supervisors identify workers)

Broad Community Support

Community Outreach:

12. What type of relationship exists between the educational service providers (from outside the business) and representatives from business, labor

union or joint union-management?

Support Systems:

13. What instructional and support services are offered?

14. How are participants recruited?

In-depth Investigations

The following section provides an in-depth look at the four sites. Each question under Goal 1 has been addressed.

Program Development

Curriculum Goals:

1. **What are the goals of ESL workplace literacy programs?**

* *Educational goals of ESL workplace literacy programs vary according to company site goals. For instance, some companies have broad general communication goals while others connect communication to specific workplace abilities which the employees should possess.*

Cosmetics

Cosmetics' educational program is committed to the overall development of its employees. This commitment was reinforced by two supervisors interviews about Cosmetics' Adult Learning Center. One supervisor explained:

> "This in-house program opens up an easier, non-threatening avenue to returning to school for adults who are intimidated by classes in colleges or community programs. This program won't transform an employee by itself. But with other initiatives like Line

> Improvement Teams and SOD and HR training, it shows the employee that Cosmetics is committed to their development and provides the opportunity for that development" (Program report pamphlet).

Another supervisor stated:

> "...classes are having a positive effect on the personnel... More people are displaying a willingness to get involved in the process, are eager to learn new skills in the process, and possess an aura of personal confidence that was lacking before" (Program report pamphlet).

Note that no specific goals were listed by representatives of the corporation except for the following broad objectives: Total quality; participative management; factory of the future; value-added procedures (Program report pamphlet).

Based on the program description provided by Adult Learning Center, the major company goal in relation to ESL barriers appears to be to increase ESL employees' communication in order to participate in Quality Assurance groups. The program director cited examples of achievements related to this goal when providing comments from ESL students such as: "Now, I can speak with anybody, coworkers, supervisors, etc. I can talk with them and explain any problems or subjects..." (Pamphlet of students' comments).

Cosmetics' program description listed four general goals which entailed better English communication at work and at home (Adult Learning Center brochure):

- Learn to read, write, speak and listen more effectively in English
- Communicate better at work
- Improve your vocabulary and pronunciation
- Learn to help your children with their school work in English

These corporate learning objectives are very general and allow a good deal of latitude for program developers. Program documents do not provide a clear indication of exactly how corporate objectives link to educational program goals and how program goals are reflected in the curriculum. It is apparent that the program director and the students have much flexibility in the design of the educational program.

This was indicated by Cosmetics' program director who stressed the importance of involving the employees in determining the program's communication goals:

> "You need to talk to the students and ask them what their goals are. What is it that they want to be able to do - as far as their writing, reading and speaking- both personally and at work? Try to create opportunities within the classroom and give them

materials to help them reach their goals" (on-site director interview, 4/1/96)

To some extent, the very broad and general goals were reflected in the class descriptions document. There were four basic ESL courses which were described as being currently offered. The titles and brief descriptions of these courses follow:

ESL IV: The Grammar of English - "This class is an advanced class for ESL students who have learned the basics and now wish to develop fluency in English" (Course description). It concentrates on Grammar. Students along with the teacher determine which grammar areas need the most attention.

ESL 101 - This course is for the student beginning the study of English. "The following skills are included in the course: writing basic sentences, basic vocabulary (including work terms), short dialogues (daily conversation with co-workers or supervisor), understanding basic instructions (written and verbal), asking questions, and pronunciation" (Course description).

ESL 201 - This course expands the skills taught in 101. "In addition to these skills, you will use past, present, and future tenses in conversation, reading, and writing. Other skills emphasized include spelling and listening" (Course description).

ESL 301 - This course improves fluency with previous skills. "Compound verb tenses will be introduced and explained. Writing skills lessons will include memos, letters, and note-taking" (Course description).

These courses all tend to fortify a general English communication goal though there is some linkage to workplace specific goal language.

The books utilized for these courses were part of a compilation entitled On your way. In addition to these books, the following materials were utilized for: ESL 101 Speaking at work and Easy true stories; True stories for ESL 201; and News for you newspaper for ESL 301. Photocopies of the table of contents for several of the books were provided by the program director. Sample topics in Speaking at work dealt with a combination of work-related themes and general life skills (i.e., greeting and addressing people; phoning in sick; understanding time clocks and time sheets; talking about your family; and W-2 forms/paying taxes). In contrast, the book series On your way dealt with grammatical structures, reading, writing, and life skills. Based on the table of contents, these books with the exception of Speaking at work teach basic ESL skills, rather than workplace specific language skills. Thus, the instructional materials tend to reinforce general ESL communication goals.

During class observation, the teacher concentrated upon basic ESL communication. Activities mostly dealt with getting the students to interact and vocalize in English. No direct connections to the workplace were noted during class observation. The general nature of the program reflects the broad and general corporate goals of simply supporting better communication.

Plastics

Plastics listed being able to perform several specific workplace tasks as goals which were reflected in the educational program. Both program descriptions and curriculum materials overtly identified the following major goal: "To help workers do their jobs efficiently, accurately and safely through learning basic English communication skills for job performance by being able to: name products, machine parts and tools; read and fill out forms related to their jobs; demonstrate Quality Control checks; understand safety rules and regulations at the company; learn names of safety equipment and apparel; read safety signs in the plant; understand measures to avoid accidents and injuries; learn basic English communication skills (i.e., greetings, report problems/accidents; calling in sick; explain absences and ask for personal days)" (Curriculum guide).

There was a direct correlation between the company's workplace task goals and the educational program goals partly due to the close relationship of human resources and the educational program staffs. The researcher was informed that the program director and the human resources manager met on a regular basis to discuss the program. During the site visit a regularly scheduled joint meeting took place at which program goals and students' progress were discussed.

By examining the Worker educational program's curriculum guide at Plastics, one can see that the educational provider custom-designed curriculum according to the company's needs. For example, the course goals included the following:

1. "Reading and filling out forms and other written material used in and related to their jobs: labels (on gaylords and skids); hand tags (on product); Bill of materials; line reject tally sheet (material handlers)..."
2. "Understanding safety rules and regulations at Plastics..." (Curriculum guide)

In addition, the program director acknowledged these work related goals during an interview when she asserted: "Our main goal is to get students to improve their English at work and thus have better opportunities for advancement" (Program director interview, 10/9/95).

Class observations also reflected workplace specific program goals. During visits, teachers utilized activities such as role-playing how to report a problem. Such activities required students to incorporate their workplace background knowledge. Both classes observed employed at least one activity which solicited information about the employees' jobs.

Fuses

Fuses program personnel are proud of their participation in the ISO (International Standards Organization) process which entails a commitment to both quality assurance and life-long learning to its employees. This pride is reflected in printed descriptions of the program's educational goals.

Fuses' main educational goal was identified in the survey questionnaire and in the program description as: "To upgrade workers' competency in communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork and basic skills in accordance with changes in workplace requirements, technology, products and processes" (Program description and Survey questionnaire). These are all elements of the ISO 9000 qualifications process.

During an interview, the program director alluded to this goal and further discussed the link between education and becoming a high quality workplace. The director stressed the company's desire to educate their workforce:

"Fuses is very interested in their workforce and closely looks at ROI (return on investment)" (Program director interview, 4/3/96). She mentioned that the company offers on-the-job training, cross-training and training sessions on-site. In addition, tuition reimbursement is tendered for seminars off-site or for going back to school. An examination of Fuses' newsletter from January-February 1996 reveals several headlines which indicate a strong interest in quality assurance and a cohesive workforce. The headlines include: "First supplier certified," "Automotive OEM updates product line," "Technology talk," "1996 Tuition reimbursement policy."

In addition to ESL courses, Fuses provides on-site courses specifically designed for leadership. (Note: Fuses also provides an ESL leadership class for supervisors). This ESL leadership class was observed during a site visit. A variety of books were incorporated into the curriculum. Books utilized included: The Idiom Advantage: Fluency in Speaking and Listening, excerpts from Workplace 2000: The Revolution Reshaping American Business, and articles from work related magazines such as Networker. An examination of the articles and excerpts exhibited prevalent themes dealing with labor and management issues.

The teacher also indicated that Fuses was interested in enabling their ESL supervisors to improve their problem solving and management skills. This indicates the degree to which the company goals drive the educational program and curriculum.

Vans

Vans' corporate goal was to improve performance of workplace-specific tasks and this goal was reflected in the ESL educational program. According to the survey instrument, the main goal for Vans was "to provide job specific basic skills for non-native English speaking workers to increase their preparedness for continued and future employment" (Survey questionnaire).

This goal was reiterated and discussed during an interview with the ESL teacher. The teacher mentioned that this goal entailed four basic skills needed by her students. Among these were:

- Measurement (to measure to the nearest 16th inch);
- Basic conversation (to communicate with co-workers and supervisors; to follow multiple step oral instructions);
- Safety awareness (to read safety signs);
- Specialized vocabulary (to understand work-specific terms such as tools and parts).

According to the teacher: "These skills prompted us to design a functional context curriculum" (Teacher interview, 3/7/96).

The curriculum included worksheets and hand-outs activities which addressed the four skills mentioned above. For example, several hand-outs and worksheets dealt with basic measurement problems, while other addressed specialized vocabulary utilized at Vans. During the class observation, the researcher made note of the teacher using several activities such as paired work and worksheets which dealt with basic English conversation and reading Vans' safety signs. Thus, the ESL workplace literacy program and curriculum appear to be strongly shaped by the company's work-related goals.

2. **What special adjustments are performed in the program when the ESL population is multi-ethnic?**

* *Only one program director indicated that the program performed special adjustments when the ESL population was multi-ethnic. At the other sites the program directors indicated that classes were conducted in the same manner for all students. However, a close examination of all four sites revealed that only superficial adjustments (i.e., students brought food and were encouraged to discuss their native countries) were conducted in the program and/or classes although the ESL population was multi-ethnic.*

Cosmetics

Cosmetics' program director indicated that special adjustments were performed when ESL classes consisted of students from differing ethnic backgrounds. Special adjustments were also mentioned on the survey instrument and during telephone conversations with the program director.

During an on-site interview, the program director mentioned: "We do address cultural differences in the early class sessions with lessons eliciting information on their home cultures" (Program director interview, 4/1/96). Further discussions about the classes were provided by the program director during an on-site interview:

> We only conduct classes in English. They are not bilingual classes; they're ESL. We need to make a conscious effort to have everyone in class speak only in English and to socialize in English to practice. People share things about their culture to sensitize others, educate their classmates. An example that comes to my mind is an activity with words that might sound the same in different languages but have different meaning. A word might mean something in a specific language (Spanish or Polish) while it means something completely different in English (Program director interview, 4/1/96).

Likewise, the ESL teacher indicated that students were asked to share cultural differences during class discussions. The teacher referred to another activity which was often used. Students bring food from their native countries and provide information about their culture (Teacher interview, 4/1/96). "In this manner, learners start to learn about cultural differences; thus, individual appreciation is reinforced and valued" (Program director interview, 4/1/96).

However, no indications of special adjustments were found in manuals, curriculum materials, program descriptions or class observations. Therefore, the evidence for these adjustments is limited to comments by the program director and the teacher describing two activities and the possibility of cultural differences being addressed during some class discussions.

Plastics

The Worker education program director at Plastics indicated the program did not perform any special adjustments when the ESL population was multi-ethnic. Responses from the survey instrument and telephone conversations with the program director indicated that all of the program participants represented a single ethnic population (Hispanics). So far the program staff had not encountered a multi-ethnic population in their ESL workplace literacy program. Thus, no special adjustments were needed. Researcher observations and brief interactions with the students (usually the researcher was able to meet the students for two to three minutes before class started confirmed that students were all Hispanics.

Fuses

Fuses' program director stated during an interview that although their ESL classes were multi-ethnic no changes were performed in the program to address these learner differences. According to her, a multi-ethnic classroom did not require unusual attention in comparison to a single-ethnic one. Based on her own foreign language teaching experience, the program director felt that ESL learners should be treated in the same manner utilizing English as the common class language. "Although most of our teachers speak other languages, we encourage them to only use English in the classroom." The survey instrument also verified the claim that no modifications were conducted in the program to address differences among ESL learners.

Vans

Vans' educational program did not perform any special adjustments. This was indicated by the program director on the survey instrument. During the teacher interview, the ESL teacher explained that the ESL population is a single ethnic one. She noted that "Out of 75 students in the last year only two have not been Hispanic" (Teacher interview, 3/7/96). However, no changes were performed when these two non-Hispanic students were present. Class observation verified that the students present were of Mexican origin. Currently, there was no need for special adjustments to be devised in Vans' program.

Summary

Based on the information gathered at the four sites, it is apparent that only one program performs special adjustments for multi-ethnic learners. Yet, these adjustments tend to be superficial as they consist of students bringing food from their native countries and sharing information about their cultures with classmates.

3. **What is the underlying philosophical orientation of the program? (i.e., common educational core; social and economic adaptation; development of cognitive and academic skills; personal relevance; social change; technological management of education)**

* *The orientation of company programs varies somewhat according to the program goals and management emphasis, but based on the gathered information, the main focus of the majority of the programs appears to be a functional context approach which reflects the orientation of social and economic adaptation.*

Cosmetics

Cosmetics program reflects a social and economic adaptation orientation. Evidence of this was noted during an interview with Cosmetics' director: "Our philosophical orientation is a concept that fits in with democratic education, empowerment, fulfilling your potential: those ideas of being what you want to be and getting where you want to go, also a sense of community. The company and we (the Learning Center) encourage workers to ask for help, if you need help; to speak up if there is something you want to change; and to go for a promotion. We respect the individual and the diversity" (Program director interview, 4/1/96).

The philosophical orientation was also manifested in documents. For instance, program descriptions depicted a new model of workplace literacy and employee development being practiced at Cosmetics' Adult Learning Center called "Shared Time":

> Front-line hourly employees, as well as salaried employees, are working with educators and management personnel to answer the call for more sophisticated basic skills and problem-solving on the job. The social fabric of this company...is being reknit to include educators and supervisors whose mission is to assist employees to evolve into self-managing teams who rely less and less on supervision and consultants... (Program description pamphlet).

The program director explained that this model was derived from a variety of perspectives: democratic education; liberatory education; modal education and feminist ethics; workforce literacy classroom discourse; and business philosophy. She asserted: "Teachers, students and supervisors participating in Shared Time work collaboratively to establish meaningful, individualized learning and development programs" (Program director interview, 4/1/96). According to her, the overall perspective is "one of respect for the human dignity, wisdom, complexity, and potential of workers who are engaged in literacy learning in the workplace."

Based on Cosmetics' characteristics and descriptions, a social and economic orientation seems to be prevalent. A major characteristic is that the curriculum is geared towards self-sufficiency and employment.

Plastics

The program philosophy of the Worker education program at Plastics is "to facilitate global skills for the workplace and for life" (Students' comments pamphlet). Further evidence of this philosophy was found in the program description which depicted the program model as one built on "the life and workplace experiences of the workers, recognizing the value of their knowledge and skills in the process of developing literacy skills" (Program description). The Staff development manual listed aspects of the model as: student ownership; and job specific, engaging, and culturally relevant customized curricula. Restatement of these program characteristics permeated almost every source associated with the program (i.e., survey instrument, interviews with teachers and directors, class observations, staff development manuals, curriculum materials, program descriptions, pamphlet of student comments).

The following excerpt is reflective of this view of personal ownership and workplace connection:

> ...Training Policy calls for the continued upgrading by employees... of their abilities and skills through participation in self-improvement schooling and job related education/training programs... Increased customer demands, more technical equipment, more sophisticated procedures and upcoming ISO requirements for all employees necessitate the upgrading of abilities and skill requirements in every...job. English language reading ability and GED level math proficiency (are) essential job requirements (Evaluation report, p.11).

Thus, the philosophical orientation of the Worker education program at Plastics appears to reflect a social and economic adaptation in which learners are taught the skills needed for improved job performance.

Fuses

Fuses' program director indicated that the educational program was based on a functional context approach. She stated, "The curriculum is tailored to focus on basic skills needed specifically by the employees for improved job performance" (Program director interview, 4/4/96).

Information from class observations, program descriptions, and interviews with teacher and program director supports the assertion that Fuses' program is based on a functional context approach. Also, researcher observations verified that the curriculum incorporated a functional context approach. For instance, during the class period learners were seen discussing specific teamwork-based operations which could be utilized by supervisors of line productions. Thus, Fuses' program depicts a social and economic adaptation.

Vans

Vans' educational program also represents a philosophical stance of social and economic adaptation. The ESL teacher stressed the need for students to learn specific skills and "to improve basic communication skills of non-native temporary factory workers" (Teacher interview, 3/7/96). This objective was also stated in the survey instrument and was further discussed during a teacher interview.

During class observation, the teacher made reference to the importance of possessing basic skills and English conversation in order to obtain a full time position at Vans. In addition, the curriculum was based on a functional context approach as it deal with the objectives needed (i.e., measurement, specialized vocabulary) at Vans. Based on these features, the program orientation was classified as a social and economic adaptation of learners.

Approaches and Methods:

4. **What teaching approach is used in ESL workplace literacy programs? (i.e., communicative approach, grammar-translation, whole language)**

* *The teaching approaches utilized in programs tend to vary according to the educational providers' (including the teacher) preference. The majority of the programs indicated the use of a learner-centered and eclectic teaching approach to address the diverse needs of students.*

5. **What teaching methods are utilized in ESL workplace literacy programs? (i.e., role-plays, worksheets)**

* *Teaching methods vary within each educational program according to the teacher and the course's goals. Some prevalent methods utilized were role-playing and use of teacher-made materials (i.e., worksheets).*

Cosmetics

Cosmetics' program director indicated that although the program utilized a combination of participatory, learner-centered, functional and eclectic teaching approaches, the teacher was given autonomy in selecting teaching methodologies.

Program pamphlets described the program's participatory approach as one which offered learners an opportunity to participate in a shared decision making process. Comments from the program director supported a functional approach: "The classes not only provide basic skills for the workplace, but teach life skills needed in everyday life" (Program director interview, 4/1/96). She also asserted that those issues which were critical to learners' lives were emphasized in the curriculum (Program director interview, 4/1/96).

As evidence of an eclectic approach to teaching, the teacher indicated that she varied her teaching styles and methods according to the class dynamics and students' needs. She noted: "Sometimes students need to concentrate on more communicative activities, whereas in other cases they need more grammar" (Teacher interview, 4/1/96). This variation in teaching styles is indicative of an eclectic approach.

The program director explained that teaching methods varied according to the teacher's predilection. Based on the following statement made by the program director, this assertion seems valid: "We vary our emphasis according to the preferences and goals of particular classes." There were additional methods which were referred to during interviews such as: TPR (Total Physical Response), role-playing, cooperative learning, pairwork, dictations, free writing activities, and worksheets (Teacher and Program director's interviews, 4/1/96). Use of several of these teaching methods was confirmed during class observation. The teacher utilized cooperative learning as students had to work together in order to obtain background information from one another. Later, the teacher dictated a short paragraph to the students with some follow-up activities.

The program director explained that there were several methods which were commonly used by teachers. For instance, a combination of Language experience approach and EGRA (Experience, Generalization, Reinforce and Application) was frequently employed for beginning levels (Curriculum manual). In addition, other methods used included role-playing, cooperative learning and teacher-made materials (i.e., worksheets).

For elementary (beginning level) ESL courses, one method often used was Language Experience Story (Curriculum manual). The ESL teacher described in detail how this approach was utilized. An activity she frequently utilizes requires the teacher to write down what the student says "word for word" without changing any grammar and making sure to skip a line between each written line. The teacher can develop several activities based on this story. A sample activity could ask for the learner to select those words which s/he would like to learn to spell and read (Teacher interview, 4/1/96).

Another method utilized is EGRA (Experience, Generalization, Reinforce and Application). The teacher explained that the primary key is to expose students to authentic text. In this manner, learners can focus on meaning and discover what they know in order to make generalizations for items such as grammatical rules. She noted: "I find that this is much more effective than asking them (learners) to memorize rules from a grammar book and filling in the blanks in grammar exercises" (teacher interview, 4/1/96).

Therefore, the characteristics of the program at Plastics suggest a portrayal of participatory, functional and eclectic approaches in the teaching methodologies of the educational program. Teacher knowledge, expertise, and predilection appear to be the major influences in teaching methods employed.

Plastics

The staff development manual indicates that the program at Plastics incorporates a worker-centered, participatory teaching approach and an eclectic teaching methodology as teachers utilize role-plays, cooperative learning activities, and the incorporation of activities which appeal to visual, aural, and kinesthetic learners. The key to this educational approach, as described by the program director, is "the active participation and involvement of workers in all aspects of the program - from the classroom to the Advisory Board/Worksite Education Committee and from curriculum development to program planning" (Program director interview, 10/9/95).

The staff development manual further discussed employee participation:

> This kind of ownership gives workers an active part in their own education, enhances their decision making skills, and builds their self-confidence. Thereby it enables employees to attain workplace competencies and participate more fully in the workplace (Staff development manual, p.15).

The language skills in the curriculum were described as holistic, meaning that all four language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) are combined and used in meaningful contexts in each class session. The staff development manual explained that this approach was utilized because a learner who is limited to only one of these skills, may also be limited in his or her ability to function in the workplace and in society. Furthermore, the program director asserted: "It is effective because each of the skills reinforces the others. For instance, reading and writing often enhance speaking abilities" (Program director interview, 10/9/95).

Evidence of an eclectic approach was found in several documents. For instance, the program director stated: "The program uses a variety of approaches. This eclectic approach is effective for all stakeholders. Educational facilitators must be trained in these approaches. Our program provides this training" (Program director interview, 10/9/95).

Further reference to an eclectic teaching approach and a worker-centered approach was apparent in the Staff development manual as follows:

> In implementing a worker-centered approach, an eclectic teaching methodology is the most effective as it allows educators to integrate the most positive aspects of different teaching methodologies. This diverse approach ensures that students of all different learning styles will benefit from instruction and be able to improve their skills, and classes will be interesting and dynamic by experiencing language in a variety of contexts (Staff development manual, p.16).

Some ESL methods listed in the staff development manual (pp. 16-18) and commonly utilized by the teachers include:

a) *Problem-Posing* - useful for developing critical thinking skills. It begins by listening for workers' issues, or "critical incidents."

b) *The Language Experience Approach* - a holistic story-telling manner to teach literacy and English language skills.

c) *Student-Centered Dialogues and Role-plays* - students learn words and structures that have meaning in their workplaces and in their lives. "Student-generated dialogues and role-plays are an ideal follow-up activity to a problem-posing session as workers' solutions can be acted out. Using their own names and those of co-workers and supervisors helps bridge the gap between classroom simulation and real life situations."

d) Realia and Photographs - a way to make learning meaningful and bridge the gap between classroom simulations and real life situations.

e) Total Physical Response (TPR) - involves oral/aural skills development. Using the imperative mode, the teacher gives the students spoken instructions.

f) Cooperative Learning - students can learn effectively in small groups.

g) Pairwork - an effective way of maximizing student talk and minimizing teacher talk.

According to the program director, "Teachers are familiarized with these teaching methods and approaches and have the flexibility to choose those activities and methods which they feel will help maximize students' learning" (Program director interview, 10/9/95).

The Worker education program at Plastics attempts to provide a worker-centered, participatory approach in which employees are active in their learning as they set goals for themselves and track their own progress. Consequently, an eclectic teaching methodology is promoted in order to best address the different needs of the learners.

Fuses

Fuses' educational program utilizes a learner-centered and eclectic teaching approach. The program director explained that several teaching methods were utilized according to the teacher's preference. The following statement about the approach that typifies Fuses' program was noted on the survey questionnaire: "All depends on the individual instructor." During an interview, the program director further indicated that the program was representative of both student-centered and eclectic approaches. According to her, the program allows the teacher to adapt to the learners' needs and styles: "We encourage teachers to be flexible and provide activities which will benefit the learners" (Program director interview, 4/3/96).

Common teaching methods and activities which the program director says are used by Fuses' teachers include: student-centered activities, cooperative learning, role-playing, TPR and communicative interaction (Program director interview, 4/3/96).

During class observation, the researcher noted that the ESL teacher utilized a combination of student-centered activities, cooperative learning and communicative interaction. A sample activity displayed during observation required for students to work together and write a letter to the C.E.O. in regard to their dissatisfaction with a company policy. Interview and observation confirm that Fuses' educational program encompasses a learner-centered and eclectic teaching approach.

Vans

Based on the survey instrument and teacher discussions, Vans was identified as incorporating several teaching approaches, such as whole language, communicative, participatory, functional and eclectic.

According to the survey questionnaire and teacher interview, the above approaches were reported as components of the educational program. Based on a classroom observation, the researcher noted a functional approach represented by worksheets dealing with workplace skills (i.e., Vans' safety signs, jargon). In addition, a communicative approach was manifested through some activities which required student discussion.

During a teacher interview, the teacher discussed that the teaching methodology most prevalent in the program was an eclectic approach with emphasis on communicative interaction. This assertion was also made in the survey questionnaire. The eclectic approach was elaborated upon when a teacher commented:

> I like to use a variety of activities according to the level of the class. Some common activities which I use include interactive activities such as Hokey Poky for reinforcement of prepositions (grammatical structures). Also, I tend to use role-plays and multi-sensory activities (Teacher interview, 3/7/96).

An eclectic teaching approach which focuses on communicative, participatory and functional activities is consistently reflected in Vans' educational program.

6. How are cultural issues addressed in ESL workplace literacy programs?

- *Each program indicated that culture was addressed throughout the curriculum. The majority of the programs treated American culture (general topics such as shopping) and worksite-specific cultural awareness (company identified precise objectives). The teachers dealt with cultural themes according to the needs of the learners.*

Cosmetics

Cosmetics pays close attention in addressing American culture and some work-related culture throughout lessons. The program director indicated that lessons addressed American culture and some work-related culture: "Lessons are a mixture of work topics and more general cultural topics such as shopping or traveling" (Program director interview, 4/1/96). Consequently, learners were encouraged to share their cultural backgrounds with their classmates.

The program director discussed that this enables the class to learn more about individuals' values and beliefs, therefore, improving cross-cultural communication throughout the company.

Further evidence of addressing culture was found in the survey questionnaire and some reference to culture was found in the curriculum manual. For example, there was a unit consisting of several cultural themes including: Stereotypes/racism; History and Culture of the U.S.; American character and Cults. In this way, American culture was overtly addressed in the curriculum. No observable evidence, however, was gathered to document topics addressing worksite-specific cultural awareness.

Plastics

Plastics' worker education program displayed a strong focus for addressing cultural issues, especially worksite-specific ones. Several worksite-specific cultural awareness objectives were addressed in the program curriculum. The program director stressed that:

> Culture is integrated into the curriculum in a natural process. For example, we include the following themes appropriate reasons for arriving late at work; and orientation for what is required on the job (lunch, breaks, W-2 forms, explanation of paycheck and taxes) (Program director interview, 10/9/95).

She also commented that the teacher is encouraged to address other issues which might be needed by a particular class.

Additional evidence of a cultural awareness focus was reflected in the survey questionnaire and the curriculum manual. One of the goals listed in the manual referred to basic communications skills which entailed worksite-specific cultural awareness: "Learning basic communication skills for greeting coworkers...; understanding and accepting praise from a foreman or supervisor; calling in sick, explaining an absence and asking for a personal day..." (Plastics' curriculum). Furthermore, there was more reference to worksite culture, specifically in regard to Plastics' company. For instance, curriculum goals included: to understand Plastics' company rules and regulations and to understand procedures for resolving a problem through the union. In conclusion, the Worker education program at Plastics made cultural awareness, especially worksite-specific, a significant feature of the educational program.

Fuses

Fuses addresses a combination of both worksite-specific and American culture goals in its program according to the needs of the employees. The following statement was cited from the survey questionnaire: "Instructors are mentored as to what (culture) to introduce by the coordinator or by the human resources manager." During an interview with the program director, she mentioned that there were two cultural issues which were of great importance. She indicated that Fuses specifically required cultural awareness in both "participatory management" and "American culture."

Cultural awareness was also reflected during a classroom observation as the researcher noted that there was an interactive class discussion in regard to (American) labor and management issues. A discussion which dealt with union involvement was generated by the class. Hence, a worksite-specific awareness is represented in the program.

Vans

Vans' program addresses general American culture as indicated during teacher interviews and by information provided in the survey questionnaire. The teacher alluded to specific cultural themes which were discussed in her classroom. Some topics included were: body language (i.e., importance of eye contact); attendance expectations; holiday information; and appropriateness of written forms (i.e., name, dates, telephone number) (Survey questionnaire and Teacher interview, 3/7/96).

The teacher also discussed sample activities which involved cultural awareness. One such activity involved the topic of immigration reform. The teacher explained that a discussion in regard to the presidential candidate "Pat Buchanan" and his strong disposition to control immigration emerged in the classroom. Apparently most of the students had been at some point illegal immigrants but currently had permits to work in the U.S. Regardless, the students were concerned about any status change which could occur if Buchanan were to be elected as President and how this modification would affect them. However, no further signs of cultural awareness in the program besides the teacher's comments were displayed in curricular material or program documents.

Staff Development:

7. **What special qualities and qualifications are required for teachers at ESL workplace literacy programs?**

* *Individual programs have specific requirements for their teachers. However, the most common is prior teaching experience, preferably in ESL workplace instruction.*

8. **How do ESL workplace literacy programs train teachers and volunteers?**

* *Programs vary in the training preparation offered to their educational staff. For instance, all programs provided in-service training and often a pre-service training was also given.*

Cosmetics

Cosmetics solicits experienced ESL workplace teachers for the educational program. In order to keep the teachers up to date in the fields of ESL, workplace education, and adult education, the program is committed to providing a wide range of staff development including both pre-service and in-service training (Teacher interview and Survey questionnaire).

Additional qualities which were sought in the teaching staff included the ability to: be understanding; work with adult learners; establish rapport (Survey questionnaire). The program director also mentioned that a recommendation from a colleague was an advantage in becoming an ESL teacher at Cosmetics (Teacher interview, 4/1/96).

Cosmetics renders a variety of training to their ESL teachers such as: pre-service, in-service, training in specific methodologies, on-going staff meetings and reflections on practices. The survey questionnaire documented the training and revealed that new teachers were given orientation discussions and tours of the company. The program director further explained that the company tours functioned as a way to familiarize teachers with the employees' tasks within the company.

There are currently two teachers in the program. During a teacher interview, the ESL teacher indicated that she had a Master's degree in Linguistics while the other had ten years of teaching experience in ESL. Both teachers had been teaching in Cosmetics' program for several years. In general Cosmetics searches for experienced ESL teachers and provides thorough staff development support.

Plastics

The Worker education program at Plastics requires teachers to possess previous teaching experience. In addition, the program staff performs an on-going reflection and an evaluation of practice through a comprehensive staff development model.

The survey questionnaire provided a list of qualities which the Worker education program at Plastics used as criteria for hiring an ESL teacher. These include: two to three years of prior experience with adult learners or ESL learners; willingness to work in a factory classroom environment; ability to be flexible; willingness to use student-centered teaching methodology; ability to attend staff development training on a regular basis. The program director also stressed the need for dedicated teachers:

> Our program looks for creative, flexible, and committed facilitators who are willing to attend regular training, interact with their peers and work as a team with peers, administrators and workers. This ensures a quality, student-centered, work-based curriculum which respects the fact that the program is sponsored by a labor union (Program director interview, 10/9/95).

During this on-site interview, the program director also asserted that staff development was an essential component to the success of the program as teachers require resources and time to reflect and enrich their practice. The following excerpt from the staff development manual provides additional insight into the staff development process:

> Staff development is not a one-time event provided by administrative staff, but is on-going and collaborative. Teachers determine their staff development needs, are encouraged to contribute ideas with their co-workers, and have regular communication with the administrative staff (Staff development manual, p.22).

In addition, teachers have the opportunity to participate in program development through committee involvement and projects. The following staff development activities were outlined in the Staff development manual:

- **Pre-Service Training** - Teachers participate in a thorough pre-service training which orients them to the program and prepares them to be effective workplace educators.
- **In-service monthly meetings and workshops** - Teachers meet monthly to discuss program issues and participate in a workshop on a teacher-chosen topic.
- **Individual class observation by the (educational program) administrative staff** - The staff regularly observes facilitators on an individual basis.

- **Individual meetings with administrative staff every 16 weeks** - Facilitators meet individually with an administrative staff member to review and discuss class plans, student progress, curriculum, and documentation requirements every 16 weeks.
- **Participation at conferences related to workplace or basic skills education** - Facilitators attend conferences and workshops to become familiar with new materials, methods, and developments in the fields of workplace education, adult education, and ESL.
- **Observation of other facilitators** - Teachers observe each other's classes to provide peer support and opportunities for growth.

Overall, the program aspires to have experienced teachers and encourages them to self-reflect and improve upon their teaching practices. To facilitate this process, the staff observes facilitators on a regular basis and provides individual feedback to further develop teachers' skills and adapt methodologies for workplace instruction.

Fuses

Fuses' program requires teachers to have experience in the area of ESL and the workplace. Some staff development is provided by the program in the form of in-service training.

Important qualities for the teachers which were listed in the survey questionnaire focused on experience in workplace ESL, adult education experience and preferably a Master's degree in Linguistics. Evidence of experienced ESL teachers was apparent during an on-site teacher interview. The ESL teacher revealed that he had taught ESP (English for Special Purposes) courses overseas for several years. Currently, he taught an ESL leadership course for Fuses' supervisors. The program director affirmed these qualities and requirements during an on-site interview (4/3/96). Furthermore, she explained that on-going mentoring (if needed) was provided for teachers and throughout the year, teachers were given the opportunity to attend interactive workshops sponsored by the Illinois Adult Learning Resource Center. Hence, Fuses' program seeks experienced ESL workplace teachers while it provides in-service training for the educational staff.

Vans

As the most important quality in hiring trainers for Vans' educational program, the teacher indicated previous experience in teaching in ESL workplace settings. The survey instrument cited that along with this practice, the program requires a state certification for teaching, although no specific area is demanded. In addition, the program provides in-service training to the teachers which usually consists of work-time release for conferences, workshops, and work-site visitations. Furthermore, suggested readings from professional materials and journals are provided to the teachers by the program director.

Other important qualities when hiring teachers were cited in the survey questionnaire. The following three features were specified: "experience in providing ESL language programs for adults; ability to design program to company needs with little assistance; and flexibility (i.e., hours, housing, changing needs)."

Although the current ESL teacher possesses an elementary education degree, she has taught adult education for several years. During an on-site teacher interview, she revealed that she had been teaching at Vans for approximately two years (Teacher interview, 3/7/96). In general Vans' educational program seeks teachers with previous ESL workplace experience and offers an in-service training to them.

Assessment and Evaluation

Initial Assessment and Progress Evaluation:

9. **What type of needs assessment and literacy task analyses are conducted prior to the development of the curriculum?**

* *The majority of the programs conduct a needs assessment by utilizing assorted assessment tools (i.e., Adult-Language Assessment Scales, Test of Adult Basic Education). Others, in addition, conduct literacy task*

analysis prior to curriculum development.

Cosmetics

Cosmetics initially conducts a student needs assessment and additionally seeks supervisors' perceptions of employee needs. The program director indicated that the program utilized such assessment tools as CELSA (Combined English Language Skills in a Reading Context) or A-LAS (Adult-Language Assessment Scales) along with personal interviews to determine the current abilities of employees. These assessment tools were also noted in the survey questionnaire. Further discussions with the director, however, disclosed that A-LAS was a preferred tool as it was a more complex test (entails an interview) and would be the only test used by Cosmetics in the future.

She also indicated that the program sought supervisors' perceptions of employees job-related needs (Survey questionnaire and Program director interview, 4/1/96). Apparently, supervisors were encouraged to share any insight to improve employees' job performance. In general a combination of assessment tools and supervisors' insight seems to facilitate and promote the development of Cosmetics' curriculum.

Plastics

The Worker education program's staff performs a thorough task analysis and utilizes the oral and written

BEST (Basic English Skills Test) as forms of needs assessment. The staff development manual provided much information in regard to the procedures undertaken for the program's task analysis. It explained how a task analysis required extensive observation and job shadowing of all workers who could potentially benefit from the educational training:

> Program staff documents the speaking, listening, reading, writing, problem-solving, computing, team-building, and vocabulary skills observed of each targeted job using a task analysis form as a guide. Also, the task analysis includes information regarding the clothing, tools, equipment, and machinery needed to perform the specific jobs; health and safety issues; and common problems and mistakes which occur (Staff development manual, p.8).

The manual also provided detailed information in regard to the interviews (i.e., questions about new technology, workplace reorganizations, and language and literacy skills which are crucial to effective job performance) which were conducted with supervisors, workers, union representatives, and shop stewards. The program director claimed that these interviews provided rich data for determining the needs of the employees (Program director interview, 10/9/95).

The staff development manual reported that teachers were actively involved in Plastics' task analysis. Teachers assist with the task analysis "if they are employed prior to its completion in order to have a better understanding of the students' job requirements and daily routines" (Staff development manual, p.8). Note, if teachers are hired after the task analysis has been completed, they still receive a plant tour and are trained to using the task analyses.

The program director shared that the program was presently conducting a test-pilot of a workplace test which had been designed by the staff. However, the results were confidential (Survey questionnaire and Program director interview, 10/9/95).

The Worker education program at Plastics involves all of its educational staff in conducting task analyses in order to identify skills needed by employees to perform job tasks. Currently, the program utilizes BEST (Basic English Skills Test) as its assessment tool.

Fuses

Fuses performed a needs assessment and task analysis prior to the development of its curriculum. The survey questionnaire indicated two steps which were taken: (1) needs assessment/job audit forms and surveys completed by management and supervisors; (2) task analysis completed by coordinator and workplace specialist during shadowing of departments and targeted employees. Further discussions with the program director clarified the procedures. She explained that supervisors were given a sheet with twelve questions which requested basic information about the department and the employees. Sample questions included:

- What are the educational goals and objectives of your department?
- What would you like your employees who are participating in this program to be able to accomplish?
- Sometimes communication breaks down because some employees are not native speakers of English. Please identify specific examples in these various situations:
  - Speaking to the supervisor
  - Speaking to co-workers
  - Understanding written material... (Evaluation materials)

A needs assessment questionnaire for supervisors was also supplied and discussed by the director. This questionnaire requested information about the jobs the employees perform and the areas where communication problems occurred. For instance, the questionnaire solicited the following information: Did problems arise in understanding job duties; calling in sick; understanding company policy? (Evaluation materials).

In addition to the coordinator and the workplace specialist conducting "shadowing," Fuses attempts to incorporate information provided by the supervisors and management prior to designing the curriculum.

Vans

Vans' program did not conduct a needs assessment and literacy task analyses prior to the development of its curriculum. Through the survey questionnaire and during a teacher interview, it was disclosed that no formal assessment was performed. As a matter of fact, the ESL teacher stated that formal assessment was not important to the company since the company's objective was to improve conversational and linear measurement skills of temporary workers as a pre-requisite for permanent hire. She further contended that the company was concerned with corporate secrecy and did not allow the educational staff to conduct either a needs assessment or a task analysis: "The company wanted fast start up with limited input. After two years, instructors just now received permission to take a company tour due to concerns of trade secrets" (Survey questionnaire). This program is therefore unique in regard to not allowing some type of needs assessment and/or task analysis.

10. **How are the ESL workplace literacy program's outcomes evaluated?**

* *Post-tests, participants' learning gains and participants' satisfaction are the major measurements for evaluation of program outcomes.*

Cosmetics

Cosmetics utilizes an assessment tool (A-LAS) as a pre-test and a post-test to determine students' learning gains. According to the program director, learners are also given course evaluations at the end of a 10 week term. These two tactics, A-LAS and student evaluations, are regarded as the most effective strategies for determining the success of the program (Teacher interview, 4/1/96).

Other indicators listed in the survey questionnarie as very effective for judging the success included: participant satisfaction; participant on the job performance; improved interpersonal relations in the company; employee promotability; increased productivity in the company; increased efficiency in the company; increased self-esteem. No indication was made as to how information was gathered in all these areas. A combination of these indicators, in addition to the assessment tool and student evaluation, is reported to provide Cosmetics' educational staff with feedback to help improve and address the learners' concerns.

Plastics

The Worker education program has implemented a multi-faceted and participatory evaluation design consisting of student evaluations (participant satisfaction), student portfolios, union and company evaluations to measure the effectiveness of the program in completing its stated objectives (Staff development manual, p. 25), and an external evaluator.

The evaluation design of the Worker education program at Plastics was guided by three principal questions:

1) To what extent has the project been effective in achieving the funded objectives?
2) To what extent has the project been effective in meeting the purposes of the Workplace Literacy Program?
3) To what extent has the project been effective in having an impact on targeted worker participants?

These questions were addressed through a multi-faceted evaluation process described below (Staff development manual, pp. 26-28):

- **Student Evaluations** - Students complete evaluations to rate the effectiveness of the program (specifically for ESL, job advancement, personal and educational purposes). The student feedback is utilized to make changes in curriculum, class materials, staff development, recruitment models and program methodology. Students also complete the Learner Assessment Form from the U.S. Department of Education[12] every sixteen weeks to assess their progress and identify their future educational goals.

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[12] This form requires learners to answer several written questions (i.e., write your name; future educational goals)

- **Student Portfolios** - A portfolio of assessment measures such as standardized tests (Basic English Skills Test, Test of Adult Basic Education), holistic writing samples, customized assessment, progress reports and other documentation (i.e., individual educational plans, attendance records and student writings) is kept on each participant for assessment and evaluation purposes. In addition, class objectives, lesson plans and student evaluations are kept on file.
- **Union and Company Evaluations** - Union and company representatives complete competency checklists to indicate the program's impact on workers' job performance and other targeted areas.
- **External Evaluator** - An extensive evaluation is conducted to measure the program's effectiveness in meeting its stated objectives.

The staff development manual depicts the program as reviewed yearly by the company's management and union staff. The handbook further explained that personnel are interviewed and fill out checklists to document competencies gained by the workers and to give input on the workplace education program quality. For instance, the supervisor checklist measures the following work competencies:

- Employee performance
- Safety improvements
- English communication
- Promotion
- Salary increases
- Productivity
- Job-related tasks
- Employee turnover

In addition, the union checklist assesses some of the above competencies, as well as participation in union activities and understanding of union benefits and procedures (Staff development manual, p.28). By including student's evaluations, portfolios, progress reports in conjunction with union and company evaluations and an external evaluation, the Worker education program incorporates an extensive amount of testimony to assess the effectiveness of the program.

Fuses

As its major source of outcome evaluation, Fuses utilizes a customized assessment tool as a pre-test and a post-test to determine students' learning gains. This test was designed by the teachers and consists of three sections: oral assessment (i.e., Where are you from?), writing and cloze passage. The program also regarded participant satisfaction as a determinant of program success. The company gave an opportunity to supervisors to assess their students in order to obtain some insight from management. For instance, supervisors assess oral instructions and written instructions of ESL employees. Evidence of these tools was affirmed in the survey questionnaire and during an on-site interview with the program director.

According to the program director, "Teachers make-up a pre-test and post-test which is utilized as an assessment measurement" (Program director interview, 4/3/96). She explained that these tests vary according to the focus of the ESL class but usually consist of an oral assessment, a writing and a cloze passage.

Additional discussions with the program director and comments from the survey instrument indicated that supervisors were given the opportunity to assess participating students: "This assessment encompasses the employee's language-related ability" (Survey questionnaire) The program director provided copies of the assessment utilized by supervisors and explained how a pre-test and post-test of this evaluation was used as a comparison tool. The assessment consists of a sheet of paper with 16 questions in regard to the employees' job. The supervisor is only required to select whether the student performed "Very Well," "Well," "Somewhat," "Poorly," "Not Observed," or "Not Applicable" according to the statement. Typical questions included in the evaluation were:

1. Understands oral instructions, directions
2. Understands written instructions, directions
3. Asks for help when it is needed

4. Communicates effectively without need for translation (Evaluation materials).

The program director and teacher commented that participant satisfaction was a very effective way to judge the success of the program. Learners were given evaluation sheets at the end of the course to determine their satisfaction. Participant satisfaction and supervisors' assessments are the most important outcomes for determining the success of Fuses' program.

Vans

Vans assesses program success by examining participant learning gains in the areas of measurement, following oral instructions, communication with co-workers and supervisors, reading safety signs, and comprehension of work specific terms. Teacher designed pre-tests and post-tests to assess students' knowledge. In addition, the company keeps track of the number of temporary workers who obtain a permanent job at Vans. Evidence of the company informally monitoring the number of workers came from the survey questionnaire and from teacher commentaries. The teacher indicated that the sole purpose of the program was to obtain permanent workers. She further explained that the company was not concerned with the educational program outcomes as long as the workers could perform their job.

Based on this information, it is apparent that participant learning gains (measured by full time hired positions) is the only method for evaluating Vans' outcomes.

11. **How does the program identify workers eligible for ESL instruction? (i.e., supervisors identify workers)**

* *Most programs encourage self-identification but in some programs management and/or labor unions help identify the workers.*

Support Systems:

13. **What instructional and support services are offered?**

* *The majority of the programs allot one-half release time to participants. Support and instructional services differ at each company site as some might offer books and materials for home study, while others might only offer learning diagnosis.*

14. **How are participants recruited?**

* *Programs vary in their recruitment efforts. The majority of the programs, however, provide a general meeting to advertise the educational program and to recruit employees.*

Cosmetics

Although self-identification from employees is the major strategy for participation in Cosmetics' program, information talks[13] and counseling interviews with individual employees are also offered to introduce and recruit employees to the Learning Center's services. As incentives for participating in the program, Cosmetics offers one-half release time and a company certification of completion.

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[13] The program director usually talks to the employees in the production line before the workshift begins)

The program director noted that supervisors also encourage employees to join the classes. Yet, at no point are employees required to participate (Program director interview, 4/1/96). Several workshops, such as typing or keyboarding, are offered frequently in order to introduce the workers to the Learning Center's services. However, employee meetings and personal contacts are the main methods utilized for recruitment (Survey questionnaire).

Several classes and a variety of instructional and support services are offered at the workplace. The classes vary in topic (i.e., ESL IV: "English grammar") in order to address learners' needs and are usually offered during the employees' workshift, with one-half release time (Program director interview, 4/1/96). The program director explained that release time functions as an incentive as: "Workers are given an option of pay or time off after successful course completion" (Program director interview, 4/1/96). Additional instructional and support services available to the employees include the following: learning diagnosis; educational and personal counseling; books and materials for home study; computer-assisted instruction; individual tutoring to catch up to level of available group classes when needed (Survey questionnaire).

This wide range of instructional and support services offered by Cosmetics tends to be promoted through educational workshops. The most common way of recruiting prospective students at Cosmetics entails a self-identification process.

Plastics

The Worker education program staff utilizes learner self-identification and recommendations from union and company management in order to identify workers eligible for ESL instruction. By distributing flyers and conducting recruitment sessions during which instructional and support services are explained, students are recruited.

Primarily, the workers self-identify and register for classes at Plastics. Often the human resources manager helps identify workers who might benefit from such classes as cited in the staff development manual: "Many times the manager encourages the employees to benefit from this program."

The survey instrument listed several methods utilized for the recruitment of students. These include the use of flyers to announce new classes and recruitment sessions to notify all workers of the educational opportunity. These flyers and recruitment sessions are conducted in Spanish since the vast majority of the employees are Hispanic.

General descriptions of the recruitment sessions were provided in the Staff development manual. Based on this information, it was apparent that union and management representatives and project staff combine their efforts during sessions to: 1) explain classes, supplemental instructional services and the support services that can be provided; 2) alleviate fears of returning to school; 3) assure workers that all test and assessments of their progress will be confidential and that participation in the program (regardless of individual's progress) will not jeopardize their job security (Staff development manual, p.9).

In addition, the program director noted that recruitment occurs when attendance drops in an existing class. If this occurs, teachers notify project staff to assist in a follow-up on former students and in recruiting new students for classes (Program director interview, 10/9/95).

Based on interviews with teachers and the program director, it was revealed that the program staff also maintains attendance records to indicate who attends classes and to help plan for continual recruitment and retention. Actually, teachers maintain attendance records for every class session and submit these records to administrative staff every eight weeks. Furthermore, teachers contact participants who are erratic in their class attendance to facilitate their return to class. Any cited obstacles to students' attendance are investigated by the educational staff in case the program can address them. During the first few weeks of classes, program staff visit the classes to verify attendance. If registered students fail to attend classes, program staff contacts students and encourages them to return to classes (Staff development manual, p.9).

The researcher observed that classes were offered both at the workplace and at the union's headquarters providing easy access and familiarity to the workers. In addition, workers are offered one-half release time as an incentive to encourage participation in the program. The program director commented that the program provides a child care center at the union's headquarters and transportation stipends are available for workers attending evening and Saturday classes. Both transportation and child care stipends are available for workers attending classes at the worksites during non-working hours. In order to facilitate the process, teachers provide stipend forms to those students needing such assistance and submit the completed forms to administrative staff every month (Staff development manual, p.9).

It is evident that the Worker education program staff at Plastics is very involved in a detailed recruitment and retention process. By utilizing a variety of techniques such as flyers, recruitment sessions, and follow-up interviews, in addition to self-identification and recommendations from union and company management, the program is able to identify workers eligible for ESL instruction and maintain their attendance.

Fuses

The main strategy for recruiting ESL students is identification by management. Supervisors will identify those employees who are in need of instruction. In addition, Fuses' program director indicated that voluntary educational presentations were utilized for recruitment and have a two-fold function: "to promote the program and to recruit prospective employees." Moreover, as an incentive, the company offers one-half release time to participating employees. The company also offers several support and instructional services such as books and materials for home study.

Additional incentives available for participation in Fuses' educational program include: potential for promotion, company certification of completion, and tuition reimbursement. Evidence of these services was noted in the survey questionnaire. In addition, Fuses' company newsletter contained a page entitled "Benefit Spotlight: 1996 Tuition Reimbursement Policy" dedicated to the tuition reimbursement program accessible to any employee. However, there was mention of how the classes had to be job-related: "The classes that are covered under this program must be related to your current or future job at Fuses..." (Company newsletter).

Although management generally identifies prospective students, Fuses tests all limited English speaking employees. The program director asserted that "those with greatest need are offered training first" (Program director interview, 4/3/96).

Overall Fuses' program offers a variety of instructional and support services which are promoted through educational presentations. Most students are identified by management; however, all non-native English speaking employees are tested. As a general incentive to program participation, the company offers one-half release time to students.

Vans

Vans' ESL teacher disclosed that the company only permits the supervisors to identify prospective students for the educational program. Although Vans' sole incentive for participation is the potential for permanent hire, the program offers two support services which are learning diagnosis and educational counseling.

Support for these teacher assertions was found in the survey questionnaire. Additional information was supplied by the teacher as she noted: "The company trainer informs supervisors of new ESL class start date and requests referrals" (Survey questionnaire and Teacher interview, 3/7/96). Students come to this program before or after finishing a shift. The company does not offer any type of release time.

Vans' program appears to be concerned with providing limited services only to those employees solely identified by supervisors. The single incentive, as mentioned by the teacher, is the potential for permanent hire. Note that apparently this incentive is a sufficient drive for students to take advantage of the program.

Broad Community Support

Community Outreach:

12. What type of relationship exists between the educational service providers (from outside the business) and representatives from business, labor union or joint union-management?

- *The majority of the companies request the assistance of an educational provider to design and conduct the educational program. Generally, the educational providers tend to be local universities, community colleges, or community-based organizations which unite with a company's management or joint labor union-management.*

Cosmetics

Cosmetics has developed a partnership with a local university in the area. The director of Cosmetics' Adult Learning Center is an employee of the local university, who has served on a contract basis as the director of the Center for the past five years.

Some unusual features about the Cosmetics program are: no presence of a labor union and one hundred percent of the budget for the ESL workplace literacy program comes from the company (Survey questionnaire).

The program director explained that Cosmetics has a centrally located Adult Learning Center within a company building where a variety of classes are offered. Since most of this building is vacant, it provides much privacy to the participating employees. She believes that this privacy and easy accessibility to the classes help make the program a success (Program director interview, 4/1/96).

Plastics

Plastics' program is a joint project between a university and a union. It is one of fifty four programs nationwide that was funded by the National Workplace Literacy Program (NWLP) of the United States Department of Education which was established to assist U.S. employees through comprehensive educational programs focusing on the provision of basic literacy and workplace skills training. The program has been funded by NWLP grant for two previous grant cycles and was awarded a third in December 1994 for a three year program cycle (Staff development manual).

The program has a Worksite Education Committee, consisting of representatives from management, the union, administrative project staff, educational providers, and workers to steer the direction for current and future educational training.

As a partnership program, a worksite education committee was established at Plastics Company to ensure the active participation of all the stakeholders. Let us take a close examination to observe the partnership's role:

> Initially, the committee meets to develop an educational training plan which will meet its own special needs and assist project staff in the steps required to start-up the classes, including the recruitment of workers, task analysis, needs assessment, and curriculum development. Once classes are in progress, the Worksite Education Committee meets regularly to ensure that all members have an arena in which to continue providing input about the program (Staff development manual).

Fuses

The educational program at Fuses entails a partnership between a local community college and the company. The program director explained some steps of the process involved in the partnership.

The first step consists of obtaining clearly defined objectives from management and supervisors. She asserted that this was the key to a successful program. "Also, supervisory support is sought as they are the key to releasing the employees to come to class" (Program director interview, 4/3/96). As an example of management and supervisory support, she referred to another company who had given money certificates and dictionaries after completion of the training. "These tokens function as an incentive for the employees" (Program director interview, 4/3/96). The last step was to maintain dialogue with the teachers. The program director did point out that Fuses does not have a labor union involvement.

Vans

Vans' program includes a partnership between a local community based organization and the company. Apparently there is not much communication among the partnership. This was evident by the following features cited in the survey questionnaire: "Communication is an obstacle as there is no advisory board. After two years instructors just now received permission to take company tour due to concerns of trade secrets." No other type of information was available for a closer examination of the partnership at Vans.

Summary of Case Studies:

Based on the information gathered from the in-depth studies of the four company sites, ESL workplace literacy tend to vary according to the company goals and joint partnership between educational provider and management. However, there are several general assertions that can be made to describe the programs:

Program Development

- Educational goals of ESL workplace literacy programs vary according to corporate site goals.
- When the ESL population is multi-ethnic, only superficial adjustments (i.e., students bring food and are encouraged to discuss their native countries) are conducted in the program and/or classes.
- The main focus of the majority of the programs appears to be a functional context approach which reflects the orientation of social and economic adaptation.
- The majority of the programs indicated the use of a learner-centered and eclectic teaching approach to address the diverse needs of students.
- Teaching methods vary within each educational program according to the teacher's preference and the course's goals. Some prevalent methods utilized were role-playing and use of teacher-made materials (i.e., worksheets).
- All programs indicated that culture was addressed throughout the curriculum. The majority of the programs treated American culture (general topics such as shopping) and worksite-specific cultural awareness (company identified precise objectives). The teachers dealt with cultural themes according to the needs of the learners.
- The most common teaching requirement among the programs is prior teaching experience, preferably in ESL workplace instruction.
- All programs provided in-service training and often a pre-service training was also given. However, programs vary in the training preparation offered to their educational staff from individual meetings with administrative staff to participation at conferences related to workplace or basic skills education.

Assessment and Evaluation

- The majority of the programs conduct a needs assessment by utilizing assorted assessment tools (i.e., Adult-Language Assessment Scales, Test of Adult Basic Education). Others, in addition, conduct literacy task analysis of job demands prior to curriculum development.
- Tested learning gains and participants' satisfaction are the major measurements for evaluation of program outcomes.
- For recruitment most programs encourage self-identification but in some programs management and/or labor unions help identify the workers.

Broad Community Support

- The majority of the companies request the assistance of an educational provider to design and conduct the educational program. Generally, the educational providers tend to be local universities, community colleges, or community-based organizations which unite with a company's management or joint labor union-management.
- The majority of the programs allot one-half release time to participants. Support and instructional services differ at each company site as some might offer books and materials for home study, while others might only offer learning diagnosis.
- The majority of the programs provide a general meeting to advertise the educational program and to recruit employees.

Goal 2

One method for assessing program effectiveness is to compare actual program practice to accepted guidelines for effectiveness. ESL workplace literacy programs in this study were compared to several guidelines for ESL and workplace literacy programs which were distilled from the research literature. Goal 2 of this study provides such a framework:

GOAL 2 - ***To refine and further develop the framework suggested by the research literature for examining ESL workplace literacy programs.*** (See pp.18-48).

1. How do ESL workplace literacy programs reflect the various definitions of adult ESL literacy? (See pp.32-34).
2. To what degree do ESL workplace literacy programs reflect the distinct features of adult ESL populations as outlined by the Ad Hoc Policy Group? (See pp.35-38).
3. To what degree are the components and orientations of effective adult ESL programs identified by Wrigley and Guth reflected in ESL workplace literacy programs? (See pp.38-46).
4. To what degree are the attributes of effective workplace literacy programs identified by the National Workplace Literacy Program at the U.S. Department of Education reflected in ESL workplace literacy programs? (See pp.19-23).

Each of the above questions is addressed in the following section. In order to facilitate the reader's comprehension, a table with the general findings from each site has been provided.

Definitions of Adult ESL Literacy

- *The programs tend to address job needs rather than general skills.*

All sites indicated that the educational goals were driven by company site goals. Some sites such as site 1 have broad general communication goals. However, sites 2, 3, and 4 attempted to connect communication to the workplace. For instance, site 2 provided an ESL leadership class. Sites 2 and 4 utilized specific work-site vocabulary in the curriculum.

- *The majority of the sites provide a wide range of ESL classes.*

Three of the sites provided a broad range of ESL courses. For instance, site 1 provided: ESL IV - the grammar of English; ESL 101 - beginning English; ESL 201 - continuation of ESL 101; ESL 301 - advanced English (focus on writing skills). Site 3 provided beginning ESL classes and offered an ESL leadership class for supervisors. In contrast, site 4 only provided an ESL class which focused on specific work-site skills.

- *All sites were interested in employee promotability.*

In addition to promotability, sites 1 and 3 were interested in the participation of Total Quality Management (TQM) and site 2 was concerned with promoting English communication on the job.

- *No evidence was noted from the perspective of community issues.*

No program suggested that ESL students could develop higher order thinking skills by a critical examination of issues in the community.

Table 13: Definitions of Adult ESL Literacy

Definitions	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4
Individual's ability to read, write & speak in English, & compute & solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job & in society, to achieve one's goals, & develop one's knowledge & potential	General communication goals meet employer's goals	Curriculum goals focus on a workplace connection	ESL leadership class addresses company's goals	Curriculum solely based on company's goals
From the perspective of a provider of a full range of ESL classes	Different ESL levels (i.e., Grammar, beginning)	Variety of ESL classes (i.e., beginning, intermediate)	Different ESL classes (i.e., ESL leadership class)	No evidence of ESL range
From the perspective of an employer	Commitment to participation in TQM; participatory management; promotability	To promote English communication on the job; enhance job performance; promotability	Commitment to participation in TQM; enhance job performance; promotability	Promotability (permanent jobs)
From the perspective of community issues	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence

Site 1 = Cosmetics; Site 2 = Plastics; Site 3 = Fuses; Site 4 = Vans

Distinct Features of Adult ESL Populations

* *The majority of the programs taught ESL as remedial classes.*

A remedial ESL class is intended to correct or improve one's skills in English. Sites 1, 2, and 4 provided ESL remedial classes. However, site 3 integrated language and leadership training.

* *Along with ESL literacy instruction, classes addressed American culture at all sites.*

In addition to American culture, sites 2 and 3 provided work-specific culture which included the following topics: attendance expectations and appropriateness of written forms (i.e., name, dates, telephone number). At all sites general American cultural topics such as holiday information and body language were discussed. Usually teachers dealt with cultural themes according to the needs of the learners and as questions in regard to culture were asked during class sessions.

* *Half of the programs did not provide bilingual or translation support.*

Only site 2 had hired bilingual aides that spoke the native language, Spanish, of the ESL learners. In addition, teachers usually spoke some Spanish. At site 4 the teacher provided translated (into Spanish) hand-outs.

* *A wide range of educational backgrounds was found at one site.*

The ESL learners at site 1 had a broad range of educational backgrounds from little schooling to college degrees from their home countries. The ESL learners at the other sites had little schooling varying from an average grade of 6th grade.

- *No evidence of ESL learners viewed as a national language resource.*

A national language resource implies that ESL learners are seen as a resource which will enrich the workplace and the community. There was no evidence of this view at any site.

Table 14: Distinct Features of Adult ESL Populations

Distinct Features	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4
ESL isn't a remedial service or compensatory program	ESL taught as remedial class	ESL taught as remedial class	ESL leadership class	ESL taught as remedial class
Adults new to English need more than just literacy instruction	American culture	Work-specific & American culture	Work-specific & American culture	American culture
Adult ESL learners who speak little or no English require bilingual or translation support	No evidence	Hired bilingual aides; teachers usually speak some Spanish	No evidence	Translated (into Spanish) hand-outs
Adults in ESL classes represent a much wider range of educational backgrounds than English speaking adults in ABE programs	Range from little schooling to college level	86% read below 6th grade level in English; 7% finished high school	Average grade level of 6th grade or less	Little schooling
ESL learners represent a national language resource	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence

Site 1 = Cosmetics; Site 2 = Plastics; Site 3 = Fuses; Site 4 = Vans

Components of Effective Adult ESL Programs

- *Two-way communication between supervisor and ESL learners was displayed as community outreach by the majority of the programs.*

Sites 2, 3 and 4 displayed two-way communication between supervisor and ESL learners. In addition, site 2 has a labor union initiative. At sites 2 and 3 supervisors are flexible and release employees from work to attend ESL classes. At site 3 the company's newsletter displayed support to the educational program. In contrast, site 1 has an Adult Learning Center which facilitates access to program.

- *The majority of the programs conduct a needs assessment.*

Sites 1, 2, and 3 conduct a needs assessment prior to curriculum development. In addition, sites 2 and 3 conduct a task analysis. Surveys are given to supervisors at sites 2 and 3. No formal analysis was performed at site 4.

- *Program design is learner-centered at the majority of the sites.*

Sites 1, 2, and 3 displayed a learner-centered program design. Site 1 also indicated a democratic and empowerment approach in the educational design. No evidence of the program design shifting to the changing needs of the ESL learners.

- *At all sites the curriculum outlined a functional literacy approach. Half of the sites provided* *opportunities for learners to work toward personal literacy goals.*

In addition to a functional literacy approach, sites 1 and 2 provided opportunities in the curriculum for learners to work toward personal literacy goals.

- *All sites displayed eclectic teaching approaches.*

In addition to eclectic teaching approaches, sites 1 and 4 exhibited a functional approach and sites 1 and 2 displayed participatory approaches. Sites 2 and 3 also depicted a learner-centered approach.

- *The majority of the programs utilize assorted assessment tools (i.e., Adult-Language Assessment Scales, Test of Adult Basic Education) for initial assessment. Tested learning gains and participants' satisfaction are utilized for progress evaluation.*

In addition to assessment tools, sites 1, 2 and 3 utilize participant satisfaction to determine progress evaluation, whereas site 4 only uses tested learning gains.

- *All programs provided in-service training and two programs additionally offered a pre-service training. However, programs vary in the training preparation offered to their educational staff from individual meetings with administrative staff to participation at conferences related to workplace or basic skills education.*

In addition to a pre-service training offered at sites 1 and 2, sites 2 and 4 encouraged participation at conferences related to workplace or basic skills education. Site 2 also provides individual meetings with administrative staff.

- *The majority of the programs allot one-half release time to participants. Support and instructional services such as books and materials for home study and learning diagnosis differ at each company site.*

Sites 1, 2, and 3 allotted one-half release time to ESL learners. In addition, sites 1 and 4 provided learning diagnosis and educational counseling. Site 2 provided child care and transportation stipends, whereas site 3 provided books and materials and tuition reimbursement.

Philosophical Curriculum Orientations of Effective Adult ESL Programs

- *The main focus of the programs appears to be a functional context approach which reflects the orientation of social and economic adaptation.*

All sites displayed a functional context skills approach. No evidence of other philosophical orientations at the sites were available.

Table 15: **Components of Effective Adult ESL Programs**

Components	Site 1 - Cosmetics	Site 2 - Plastics	Site 3 - Fuses	Site 4 - Vans
Community outreach (workplace)	Adult Learning Center facilitates access to program	Labor union initiative; Supervisors release & are flexible; Two way communication between supervisor & learner	Newsletter supports education program; Supervisors release & are flexible; Two way communication between supervisor & learner	Two way communication between supervisor & learner
Needs assessment	Needs assessment; Supervisor's insight of student needs	Needs assessment; Task analysis	Needs assessment; Job audit forms; Surveys from management/ supervisor	No formal analysis
Program design: Responds to literacy needs of students	Learner-centered; Empowerment; Democratic education	Learner-centered	Learner-centered	No evidence

Curriculum: (literacy, teaching approaches, classroom teaching linked w/assessment & evaluation	Functional literacy approach; Personal literacy goals	Functional literacy approach; Personal literacy goals	Functional literacy approach (i.e., ESL leadership class)	Functional literacy approach
Approaches & methods	Participatory, learner-centered, functional & eclectic teaching approaches	Worker-centered, participatory & eclectic	Learner-centered & eclectic	Whole language, functional, eclectic & communicative
Initial assessment & progress evaluation	A-LAS; Participant satisfaction	BEST; Participant satisfaction	Teacher-made assessment tool; Participant satisfaction	Tested learning gains
Staff development	Pre-service; In-service	Pre-service; In-service; Meetings with staff; Conferences	In-service	In-service; Conferences
Support services	One-half release time; Learning diagnosis; Educational counseling; Individual tutoring	One-half release time; Child care; Transportation stipends	One-half release time; Books & materials for home study; Tuition reimbursement	Learning diagnosis; Educational counseling

Table 16: Philosophical Curriculum Orientations of Effective Adult ESL Programs

Philosophical Orientation	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4
Common educational core: "Basic skills approach"	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence
Social & economic adaptation: "Functional context skills"	Shared Time model: employees evolve into self-managing teams who rely less on supervision	To facilitate employees' global skills for workplace & for life	To ameliorate basic skills needed specifically by employees for improved job performance	To learn specific skills & knowledge to be hired as permanent workers at the company
Development of cognitive & academic skills: "Learning how to learn"	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence
Personal relevance: "Personal growth & self-actualization"	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence
Social change: "Participatory program design"	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence
Technological management of education	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence

Site 1 = Cosmetics; Site 2 = Plastics; Site 3 = Fuses; Site 4 = Vans

Attributes of Effective Workplace Literacy Programs

- *All programs displayed active involvement by upper management.*

In addition to upper management involvement, on-line supervisors at sites 1, 2, and 3 were actively involved by recruiting and releasing employees to attend ESL classes. Other features of active involvement were displayed at: site 2 with union involvement; site 1 with the C.E.O. attending employees' recognition awards day.

- *Only one program displayed active involvement by employees in conducting literacy task analysis.*

Site 2 was the only program that involved the union member employees in conducting a literacy task analysis and determining worker literacy levels.

- *Some form of a literacy task analysis was conducted at the majority of the sites.*

Sites 2 and 3 were the only programs that conducted a literacy task analysis. Site 1 did not provide any evidence of utilizing a literacy task analysis.

- *The majority of the programs developed instructional materials related to literacy skills required on the job.*

Sites 2 and 4 emphasized basic English communication skills for job performance enhancement, whereas site 4 emphasized five skills (i.e., measurement) in the instructional materials. However, site 1 did not provide any evidence of developing such instructional materials.

Table 17: Attributes of Effective Workplace Literacy Programs

Attributes	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4
Active involvement by project partners	Upper management; Supervisors release & recruit; C.E.O. attends recognition awards day	Upper management; Supervisors release & recruit; Union involvement	Upper management; Supervisors release & recruit	Upper management
Active & on-going involvement by employees in conducting literacy task analysis & determining worker literacy levels	No evidence	Union members involved	No evidence	No evidence
Systematically analyzing on-the-job literacy requirements	No evidence	Specific job requirements (i.e., for assembly line workers & machine operators)	Specific job requirements (i.e., for supervisors & assembly line workers)	Specific job requirements (i.e., basic skills such as measurement)
Developing instructional materials related to literacy skills required on the job	No evidence	Basic English communication skills for job performance enhancement (i.e., machine parts)	Basic English communication skills for job performance (i.e., ESL leadership class)	Five skills (i.e., Measurement, specialized vocabulary)

Site 1 = Cosmetics; Site 2 = Plastics; Site 3 = Fuses; Site 4 = Vans

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Summary of Goal 2

In order to assess program effectiveness of the ESL workplace literacy programs in this study is to compare actual program practice to accepted guidelines for effective ESL and workplace literacy programs which were distilled from the research literature. A summary of the general assertions is provided below:

Definitions of Adult ESL Literacy

- The programs tend to address job needs rather than general skills.
- The majority of the sites provide a variety of ESL classes.
- All sites were interested in employee promotability.
- No evidence was noted from the perspective of community issues.

Distinct Features of Adult ESL Populations

- The majority of the programs taught ESL as remedial classes.
- Along with ESL literacy instruction, classes addressed American culture at all sites.
- Half of the programs did not provide bilingual or translation support.
- A wide range of educational backgrounds was found at one site.
- No evidence of ESL learners viewed as a national language resource.

Components of Effective Adult ESL Programs

- Two-way communication between supervisor and ESL learners was displayed as community outreach by the majority of the programs.
- The majority of the programs conduct a needs assessment.

- Program design is learner-centered at the majority of the sites.

- At all sites the curriculum outlined a functional literacy approach. Half of the sites provided opportunities for learners to work toward personal literacy goals.

- All sites displayed eclectic teaching approaches.

- The majority of the programs utilize assorted assessment tools (i.e., Adult-Language Assessment Scales, Test of Adult Basic Education) for initial assessment. Tested learning gains and participants' satisfaction are utilized for progress evaluation.

- All programs provided in-service training and two programs additionally offered a pre-service training. However, programs vary in the training preparation offered to their educational staff from individual meetings with administrative staff to participation at conferences related to workplace or basic skills education.

- The majority of the programs allot one-half release time to participants. Support and instructional services such as books and materials for home study and learning diagnosis differ at each company site.

Philosophical Curriculum Orientations of Effective Adult ESL Programs

- The main focus of the programs appears to be a functional context approach which reflects the orientation of social and economic adaptation.

Attributes of Effective Workplace Literacy Programs

- All programs displayed active involvement by upper management.

- Only one program displayed active involvement by employees (which was Site 2) in conducting literacy task analysis.

- Some form of a literacy task analysis was conducted at the majority of the sites.

- The majority of the programs developed instructional materials related to literacy skills required on the job.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter is divided into 4 sections: 1) summary of the study; 2) discussion of the findings; 3) implications for practice; and 4) recommendations for future research.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine the administrative and instructional practices (key components of effective programs) in ESL workplace literacy programs to help practitioners implement and improve program effectiveness for ESL learners with limited literacy skills.

The study was divided into three phases. *Phase I* solicited the identification of ESL workplace literacy programs within segments of the Midwest (the states of Illinois and Indiana). *Phase II* established content validity of the survey instrument and solicited an in-depth examination of identified ESL workplace literacy programs with a linguistic diversity among its learners. *PHASE III* consisted of an in-depth investigation of four ESL workplace literacy programs.

The primary data for this study were collected by: a review of relevant ESL workplace literacy literature; telephone interviews with state education officials to learn about ESL workplace literacy programs; surveys of directors of ESL workplace literacy programs; telephone conversations with program directors; site visits to four programs; individual and group interviews with program administrators, and literacy teachers as well as classroom observations; and review of documents such as training manuals, teaching materials, etc.

There are two research goals which were addressed in this study:

GOAL 1 - ***To describe to adult basic educators and program directors the administrative and instructional practices as well as lessons learned from these Midwestern ESL workplace literacy programs.***

The data for this goal were based on a survey of 22 ESL workplace literacy programs followed by four in-depth program examinations.

GOAL 2 - ***To refine and further develop the framework suggested by the research literature for examining ESL workplace literacy programs.*** (See pp.19-49).

Four questions framed the analysis for this goal.

1. How do ESL workplace literacy programs reflect the various definitions of adult ESL literacy? (See pp.33-35).
2. To what degree do ESL workplace literacy programs reflect the distinct features of adult ESL populations

as outlined by the Ad Hoc Policy Group? (See pp.36-39).

3. To what degree are the components and orientations of effective adult ESL programs identified by Wrigley and Guth reflected in ESL workplace literacy programs? (See pp.39-47).

4. To what degree are the attributes of effective workplace literacy programs identified by the National Workplace Literacy Program at the U.S. Department of Education reflected in ESL workplace literacy programs? (See pp.20-23).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study entailed the use of a survey questionnaire which elicited detailed responses information about the characteristics of 22 ESL workplace literacy programs found in the Midwest followed by an in-depth investigation of four effective programs in the following manufacturing areas: Cosmetics, Plastics, Fuses, and Vans. A thematic discussion of findings is presented below.

Program Features

Curriculum goals:

The educational goals of the four ESL workplace literacy programs visited in this study varied according to corporate site goals. For example, no specific goals were listed by representatives of the Cosmetics program except to increase ESL employees' communication in order to participate in Quality Assurance groups. In contrast, the other three companies provided specific workplace tasks as goals (e.g., naming products; leadership; and understanding safety rules and regulations at the company). However, an underlying goal of all programs was to improve ESL employees' basic communication.

This picture of multiple program goals mirrors previous studies of workplace literacy programs. A survey of the goals of 121 workplace literacy programs revealed that most programs reported multiple goals (Mikulecky et al., 1996). Fifty percent of the programs identified "job enhancement and productivity" as a goal. Also included in this goal were "improved safety" and "high performance workplace." "Training for retention or advancement" was reported by 30% of the programs with the intention to upgrade employees' skills.

In the current study, program goals were determined through discussions with program directors and examination of program goals expressed in curriculum and program documents. In this study, most programs also reported multiple goals. Listed below are a summary of the cited goals: Cosmetics' goals: become a "high performance workplace" and "job enhancement and productivity;" Plastics' goals- "job enhancement" and "learner-centered general basic skills"; Fuses' goals- "high performance workplace" and "job enhancement and productivity"; Vans' goals- "functional context literacy." Based on these findings, general workplace literacy programs and ESL programs both have multiple goals with "job enhancement and productivity" as the single most significant goal.

Program existence:

Many programs in this study have existed less than 5 years (median of 4.75 years). These data are somewhat contrary to the literature on workplace literacy training which suggests that this type of instruction is not new (Carnevale, 1990; Chisman, 1989; Philippi, 1988). Some employers discontinue the ESL workplace programs after two or three years. We can speculate that this may be due to the lack of documentation of how instruction has improved ESL learners' performance at the workplace. Often management has unrealistic expectations as they might assume that workplace ESL classes[14] will turn participants with low-level language skills into fluent speakers of English. Educational providers need to provide realistic expectations to employers and inform them that one ESL class will not make employees proficient.

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[14] A typical ESL class entails approximately 40-60 hours of class instruction.

Program hours:

The data collected in this study indicate that the majority of the 22 programs (85%) were offered both during work hours and during non-work hours. Half of the respondents indicated that participation in programs was voluntary for some employees and mandatory for others. It could be argued that companies which felt ESL literacy education was needed would schedule classes during working hours and require workers' attendance. One might interpret offering classes but making participation voluntary as an indication that the company was ambivalent about the program. Otherwise, the company would require the employees' participation in the program. At the same time, a company which offers classes after regular working hours might give the notion that education is not as important as maintaining the production. However, this scheduling could also be viewed by management as a strategy to produce a better program since only motivated learners would likely choose to attend. During interviews, many program directors indicated that the company thought class participants should contribute their personal time since they were providing instruction, facilities, and books.

The researcher believes that participation in programs should be voluntary and companies should provide one-half release time. In this manner, learners still have a choice in participating and demonstrate an initiative by attending classes. Companies also display interest in the workforce by investing in their education while at the same time learners contribute some personal time in their learning process.

Providers of programs:

All twenty-two ESL workplace literacy programs in this study were offered through private contractors which consisted of community based organizations (13.6% of respondents), colleges (45.5%), universities (18.2%), state funded institutions (4.5%) and private firms (18.2%). These findings are consistent with those of other studies of workplace literacy programs. For instance, in a study of Fortune 500 and Service 500 companies' workplace literacy programs, the majority of the responding programs (51%) did not use company personnel to provide instruction in their programs (Wright, 1993). Evidently, 95% of the responding companies provided all or some part of the workplace literacy training through private contractors. A recent study of the organizational patterns of 121 workplace literacy programs revealed that 76% of the programs were involved in some sort of partnership (Mikulecky et al., 1996). The vast majority of the partnerships entailed community agencies such as labor councils, chambers of commerce, and school systems with 73.9% of the respondents, followed by college partners with 52%.

Union involvement:

In the current study 55% of the ESL workplace literacy providers rendered services to both unionized and non-unionized companies. Only 20% of the providers were not involved with unionized companies in some fashion. This finding parallels the many reports describing the benefits and increased priority of workplace literacy programs to employers, unions, and workers in unionized companies (Sarmiento, 1989).

Reasons for ESL workplace literacy programs:

Respondents in this study cite the most important reason for providing ESL literacy education is to improve basic language/communication skills of the employees. The second most important reason is to improve organizational productivity which encompasses the commonly associated concepts of T.Q.M. (Total Quality Management) and ISO 9000 (International Standards Organization).

The Center for Public Resources (1985) conducted a survey of businesses in which employers were asked to rank order the factors in their training programs which had the most significant corporate impact (Fields et al., 1987). According to the survey results, general productivity costs were ranked first in importance, followed by supervisory time necessary, product quality, time and effort to increase skills, and workers' safety awareness. Wright's study of

Fortune 500 and Service 500 corporations found that the most important reason for offering workplace training was to reduce accidents and improve worker safety, whereas, the second most important was to improve organizational productivity. Therefore, findings from general workplace literacy studies and the current ESL workplace literacy investigation suggest that company interest in improving workplace literacy is not only an educational concern but also an economic matter.

Budget funds:

Based on the current study, company funds provide the majority of the budget for ESL workplace literacy programs. It was indicated that 89.5% of the respondents reported that their companies pay for some of the program, while 68.4% pay for half or more of the program. In addition, 31.6% of the companies provided 100% of funds for the program; 47.4% of the respondents (with an average of 16.6% of their total funds) indicated that their programs were partially supported by state funds; and 31.6% of the respondents (with an average of 17.6% of their total funds) had money allocated from federal funds. But union contributions, employee fees and local government funds were not identified as any part of the operating budgets for responding literacy programs.

An analysis of the funding sources of general workplace literacy programs conducted by Bussert in the late 1980's and early 1990's revealed that 33% of the programs were funded by single providers, with businesses (21%) the largest single source followed by state and local funders (6% each). The majority of the programs also had multiple source funding: 27% from federal sources; 48% from state/local governments; 67% from businesses; 9% from unions; and 12% from organizations such as libraries and area literacy councils (1991).

Several government studies such as the Report of the Commission on Workforce Quality and Labor Market Efficiency (1989) have stressed the importance of educating companies' employees. Based on the major contributions to operating budgets of ESL workplace literacy programs, it is apparent that companies in this study have been making greater investments in their workers.

Recruitment and selection of program participants:

Companies utilize various methods to recruit prospective participants into ESL workplace literacy programs. The most effective strategy cited by the educational providers in this study was personal contacts, while referral from other workers was second. It is reasonable to expect these methods to be most effective as employees speak to co-workers and promote the success and benefits of participation in the program. Sarmiento and Kay

(1990) argue that it is essential for trusted employees to be involved in the recruitment efforts so that prospective participants will realize that their interests, not just those of the company, will be served in the program.

In order to identify prospective participants, half of the responding companies indicated that supervisors identified employees, while one-third of the respondents mentioned the use of self-identification. Several reports in the literature indicate that supervisors are often instrumental in recruitment (Nurss, 1990; U.S. Departments of Education and Labor, 1988). REEP, the Arlington Education and Employment Program (1990) claimed that supervisors had to be involved in recruitment and program planning from the outset so that they would become supportive of employees. Supervisory support was a major key in encouraging and motivating employees to join and continue in the program.

Many times workplace literacy programs utilize incentives to increase employee participation. In this study, 80% of the respondents noted that one-half release time is offered to employees as an incentive to encourage participation in the program, whereas, 70% of the respondents still view a company certificate of completion as the major incentive for participation. Mikulecky's examination of the organization and incentives of workplace literacy programs indicated that the most common direct incentive is financial support for students such as employer-paid time while training at the worksite and full payment of tuition, books, and material costs (1995).

Support services:

All of the ESL workplace literacy programs provided some type of support service to facilitate employees' success in the program. According to the data collected in this study, the most common instructional support service available to ESL employees was books and materials for home study. Educational counseling (70%) and learning diagnosis (55%) were additionally provided to the majority of program participants. These services are important because most employees have a variety of obstacles to overcome if they are to begin and continue in education programs.

Assessment and evaluation:

Assessments of training needs determine the steps in delivering and evaluating training (Chisman & Associates, 1990). The vast majority of the respondents (85%) in this study stated that some type of assessment (i.e., a needs assessment, a job analysis, and/or a task analysis) was performed in the program. Most programs also allowed the educational provider to test employees by administering some type of standardized test such as BEST (Basic English Skills Test), CELSA (Combined English Language Skills in a Reading

Context), or TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education). Other programs combined parts of these tests with oral interviews to determine ESL employees' proficiencies. Apparently, two of the educational providers had designed customized workplace tests for companies as in the cases of Plastics and Fuses. (These tests were confidential and were not shared with the researcher).

The fact that multiple methods of assessment were used is beneficial. Sarmiento (1989) warns that linking assessment to jobs through literacy audits might jeopardize some literacy initiatives. He insists that such practices might make workers feel threatened about their future work as they might not measure up to prescribed expectations. In the current study, the researcher experienced this notion of preserving learner privacy as companies did not allow formal interviews with ESL learners. It was evident that the companies felt employees would feel threatened and/or intimidated by an outsider questioning them.

In order to evaluate programs, companies typically utilize a variety of methods. All four programs examined in the in-depth investigation used some sort of pre- and post-measures to determine students' learning gains. Out of the four programs, Plastics had implemented the most extensive system to assess the effectiveness of the program. It entailed a multi-faceted and participatory evaluation design consisting of student evaluations (participant satisfaction), student portfolios, union and company evaluations to measure the effectiveness of the program in completing its stated objectives, and an external evaluator.

Findings from the survey of 22 ESL programs revealed that 50% of the respondents identified improved interpersonal relations in the company and participant performance on the job as effective methods for determining success of programs. Wright's (1993) study found similar results as the most effective methods identified were improved interpersonal relations in the company and increased efficiency.

Obstacles to Program Success:

Several program directors indicated in the survey questionnaire that obstacles were occasionally encountered in their ESL workplace literacy programs. Overall six respondents indicated the following problems: management's non-cooperation to release employees from their jobs to attend class; and multi-level ESL classes. Other obstacles cited included: family and personal time constraints (i.e., second jobs, child care concerns); transportation (many workers van pool to worksite); and long term funding.

In Bringing literacy to life, the special challenge of providing instruction to multilevel ESL classrooms is discussed (Wrigley & Guth, 1992). Often these classes are comprised of students from a variety of countries (including language and cultural differences), educational experiences, and socio-economic backgrounds. Wrigley and Guth suggest several teaching strategies to help teachers organize the multilevel classroom and present activities that are responsive to learner needs. Some of these strategies include setting up small groups, designing project work and shared tasks, and organizing the curriculum around themes.

Key features of effective programs:

During site visits to the four ESL workplace literacy programs, the researcher asked program directors or ESL teachers to discuss what they considered to be the critical features for a successful program. Although the answers varied considerably, general themes such as teacher's characteristics and commitment of stakeholders were found. For instance, the Cosmetics' program director emphasized the need for empathetic teachers who can relate to the students and are cognizant of learner and program goals. Plastics' program director emphasized the necessity to integrate all stakeholders at all levels of the program operations. Along these lines, she discussed exemplary practices such as advisory boards, including all stakeholders (i.e., workers, union, management, and educational providers) which guide program direction. In addition, programs need to provide an innovative staff development model and ESL classes to these employees utilizing interactive and work-based learning materials and methodologies which increase job promotability and enhance workers' personal needs.

The Fuses' program director stressed three key features: the importance of obtaining clearly defined objectives from supervisors and management; supervisory support; and close dialogue/interaction with teachers. Similarly, Vans' ESL instructor also mentioned four traits which were needed by teachers: recognition of company goals; flexibility to serve the needs of the learners and company; adjustment to company's perception and priorities (in design and implementation of program); and communication between educational provider and human resources/management. All of these key features may help future program developers to implement effective ESL workplace literacy programs.

Recruitment and selection of trainers:

Business training articles contend that selecting highly qualified trainers is critical for the success of a workplace literacy program as they play a major role in motivating learners (Filipczak, 1992; Lee, 1992). Companies in the current study recruited trainers from outside the organization to design and implement the ESL workplace literacy programs. The educational providers selected for these programs indicated that the specific qualifications required of their ESL teachers were education (i.e., background in linguistics, ESL or education) and an average of three years of teaching experience. Respondents were also asked to list the most important qualities for hiring ESL teachers. The most important quality mentioned was experience in workplace training followed by interpersonal skills and abilities such as creativity, flexibility, and having a personal touch.

The literature seems to confirm these findings that trainers are usually recruited from outside the company (Fields et al., 1987; Filipczak, 1992; Wright, 1993). In addition, these trainers are procured by the companies according to the match between the requirements of the position and their qualifications.

Educational providers offer a variety of training to ESL teachers. In this study, 75% of respondents offered in-service training to the ESL staff. A strikingly large majority (60% of the respondents) offered pre-service training while 10% did not offer any type of training. Yet, 30% of the respondents identified other types of special training[15] such as: monthly training sponsored by the program, internship and shadowing, interactive workshops every 2 months, and on-going mentoring. Very little research on this area is available to offer information on the types of training offered to teachers at other ESL workplace literacy programs.

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[15] Note that it was impossible to determine to what degree the training dealt with ESL and workplace or the extent to which training was beneficial.

The in-depth investigation of the four sites, however, provides more detail in regard to the different training. The inquiry revealed that all four programs provided in-service training while half of them offered a pre-service training. Nonetheless, the training preparation of these programs was quite diverse. For instance, some programs (i.e., Vans) offered only a general workshop, whereas others (i.e., Plastics) offered a wide variety of training including: individual meetings with administrative staff; participation at conferences related to workplace or basic skills education; monthly meetings and workshops; individual class observation by the (educational program) administrative staff; and observation of other facilitators. One could argue that the latter program has a more informed staff as they were constantly provided with on-going feedback and insight. Consequently, one would expect this knowledge to reflect in their teaching and thus, enhance instruction.

Teaching approaches and methods:

Instructors utilize no single predominant teaching method in ESL workplace literacy programs. The in-depth investigation of the four programs in the current study revealed that all programs utilize an eclectic teaching approach which uses a variety of methods to address the diverse needs of learners. Other teaching approaches also identified during the investigation included: functional; participatory; whole language; communicative; language experience approach; and learner-centered.

It was evident that teaching methods varied within each educational program according to the teacher's preference. For instance, some teachers were likely to utilize TPR (Total Physical Response), role-playing, and/or EGRA (Experience, Generalization, Reinforce and Application) in ESL courses. Other teachers instead preferred methods such as pairwork; student-centered dialogues; dictations; realia and photographs; free writing activities; teacher-made activities; cooperative learning; and problem-posing activities. During interviews, program directors maintained that teachers possessed the flexibility to choose activities and methods to best maximize students' learning.

An eclectic teaching approach was seen by teachers to be most effective in ESL workplace literacy programs as it allows educators to integrate the most positive aspects of different teaching methodologies to help students of different learning styles benefit from instruction. This finding is in consensus with several adult ESL literacy research studies. Wrigley and Guth's study of adult ESL programs (1992) denotes the difficulties of implementing a teaching approach across all program components. As a result, most ESL literacy programs implement an eclectic approach in which teachers combine methods of various approaches.

Program design and populations served:

Many of the ESL workplace literacy programs examined in this study served more than one ethnic group. A particular emphasis was placed on learning how programs addressed a broad range of ethnic and cultural issues, since not much investigation had been conducted in this area. Only ten of the 22 survey respondents noted that special adjustments for ESL workplace literacy programs were performed for a multi-ethnic population. Yet, only six respondents were able to provide specific examples of these modifications (i.e., extra in-class or tutoring assistance, a bilingual aide). A close examination of responses during site visits suggests that there were no significant differences with regard to program design between multi-ethnic vs. single ethnic classrooms as all of the listed examples were utilized in both multi-ethnic and single ethnic classrooms.

In addition to special adjustments performed in programs, 90% of the respondents indicated that culture was addressed in the curriculum in some way. The majority of the programs treated American culture (general topics such as shopping) and worksite-specific cultural awareness (company identified precise objectives). Apparently, 44.4% of these respondents indicated that culture was addressed in an informal way throughout the curriculum. For many programs this implied that the teacher dealt with cultural issues through questions asked by students or through role-plays and discussions as culture related to the competency being taught. It was suggested that the teachers dealt with cultural themes according to the needs of the learners.

There is a great deal about culture which program developers should consider for workplace ESL programs. Cross-cultural research in the area of adult ESL reveals that participants bring specific expectations about educational roles which influence their views of the class and their willingness to participate (McGroarty, 1993). Some learners may bring to class expectations concerning teacher relationships and behavior that prevailed in their home countries (McCargar, 1993). As a result, learners from traditional educational systems may expect teachers to behave in a more formal fashion during class and may be confused if a teacher utilizes informal instructional methods such as first names and no extensive correction of grammar.

Similarly, teachers may bring to the classroom their own expectations about teacher behavior and instruction (McGroarty, 1993). This tends to include their views on appropriate educational goals for students in the American system which usually entails preparing students to become self-reliant adults, concerned with personal advancement. However, some ESL learners may not have the same values and perhaps may regard this goal as a negative aim. It is evident, thus, that there is much potential for conflicting expectations of instruction between teachers and learners. An example of this cultural friction was cited at Cosmetics. The program director explained that an Eastern European (Polish) employee did not like an ESL class because the teacher did not correct students' grammatical errors while speaking. The employee expected the teacher to correct every single error. As a result, the employee wanted to drop out of the class and refused to participate in class activities. The situation was resolved when the director and the teacher explained the reasons for not correcting all the errors. Consequently, the worker began to participate once more in the classroom.

Orientation of program:

The literature cites a functional job context approach as one of the elements of a successful workplace literacy program (Carnevale, 1989). This approach is truly valid and sensible to utilize with adult learners, as one of the key principles in adult education is that adults are motivated to learn if it will help them perform tasks or deal with problems confronted in daily life (Knowles, 1984).

In this study, 75% of the surveyed programs reported a functional context approach which emphasizes the life skills needed in every day life and at the workplace. Further data gathered from the case studies revealed that the four programs emphasized a functional job context approach. The educational philosophy and curriculum orientation associated with this approach is social and economic adaptation. Wrigley (1990) describes this orientation as:

> ...designed to help adults acquire the skills and knowledge needed to be self-sufficient, to function effectively in society, to access services, and to integrate into the mainstream culture (p.454).

Potential contradictions:

The vast majority of the programs surveyed in this study claimed to utilize both a learner-centered and functional job context approach. However, these two approaches can potentially cause some conflict especially if a learner is not interested in the demands of the job.

In the case of a learner-centered worker education program, the learner sets the direction and pace of the program. Education is seen as a means for workers to confront personal literacy issues and address those issues through using language as the basis for thinking (Pharness, 1991; Sarmiento & Kay, 1990). Although a functional job context approach reflects the life skills needed in every day life and at the workplace, many programs with such an approach develop the curriculum based on an employer's perception of participants' language needs for their positions. Often, employers will dictate the goals of an ESL workplace literacy program.

In this study, the majority of the programs claimed that their programs were learner-centered and the curriculum was based on a job context approach. The information gathered at the four sites, however, seems to emphasize a job context approach at sites 3 and 4, while site 1 emphasizes a learner-centered approach. Site 2 was the only program that truly seemed to emphasize both approaches.

In a learner-centered approach at ESL workplace literacy programs, learners want to develop and acquire a second language as their goal. Usually the participants in such programs take an ESL class which approximately consists of 40 hours of instruction. Unfortunately, it is unrealistic to expect students to be able to communicate fluently after such a short amount of instruction. In contrast, a job context approach generally targets specific worksite goals for the ESL learners as employers want learners to be able to function at the workplace. Incorporating both approaches in ESL workplace literacy programs is extremely challenging. Therefore, it is a contradiction that is not easily resolved.

The researcher suggests several ways to incorporate both approaches in ESL workplace literacy programs. Teachers should frequently allow learners to decide what to read and write to improve their skills at the workplace.

One strategy is to begin classes with group discussion of topics initiated by workers (i.e., conflicting workplace issues; workplace materials encountered). In addition, teachers should develop LSP (Language for specific purposes) courses which focus on specific language goals (i.e., English for operators; English for production workers). ESL classes also need to be offered in a continuum basis so that a learner may continue his/her progress by participating in the next class level.

A further challenge of ESL workplace literacy programs is to find teachers trained in ESL who work on a part-time basis. Most of the programs surveyed in this study did not require for their teachers to have prior ESL training. For many ESL teachers, staff development consists of voluntary attendance at workshops, conferences, or seminars for several days. Perhaps, employers could require that the systematic in-service teachers receive should focus on ESL training as opposed to general literacy training.

Yet, another challenge faced by educators in ESL workplace literacy programs is the issue of ESL learners as a national language resource. There was no evidence in this study that the native language of the ESL learners was valued by the companies. Employers should take advantage of this valuable resource. Some companies' workforce consists of recently arrived immigrants and refugees with limited English proficiency. These employees bring their strong family values and work ethic to the workplace. Employees speaking a second language could be used as bilingual aides to provide explanations of workplace procedures and training in the native language of the limited English proficient workers.

Sometimes employers expand their factories into other countries. Workers who speak a second language could provide a variety of services such as basic language communication and cultural information. By valuing learners' native language, workers are likely to feel more confident and productive which in turn will benefit the company.

Model program:

Based on the information gathered about ESL workplace literacy programs in this study, the researcher believes that in order for an ESL workplace literacy program to be effective there are several key features which program directors need to emphasize:

1. Educational staff is trained about corporate culture (i.e., the company's philosophy, products).
2. Constant communication with all stakeholders, including labor union, management, employees, funders, teachers is provided.
3. A needs assessment is conducted.
4. A variety of evaluation measures (quantitative and

qualitative measures) connected to program goals (i.e., pre- and post-tests; portfolios of learner classwork; learner interviews; workplace observations) are performed. Measures are provided to the employers to show program's impact.

4. Continuous staff development is provided to teachers, especially in the areas of: ESL at the workplace; designing worksite curricula; methods and approaches for teaching adults. Also, close contact with teachers is maintained.
5. Curriculum design is tailored to the worksite.
7. Cross-cultural issues (both American culture and worksite culture) are addressed in the curriculum and special adjustments for multi-ethnic students are performed in the classrooms. For instance, teachers need to be aware that ethnic and gender-related issues may cause tension during instruction.

Special difficulties encountered:

Several difficulties were encountered by the researcher while conducting this study. The first challenge was the identification ESL workplace literacy programs in the Midwest. There was no available database to help identify such programs. Since there was a limited number of ESL workplace literacy programs, all of the programs were contacted (even if there was no evidence of being "effective"). Thus, a criteria had to be established in order to determine if the programs were truly effective.

Selection of the four in-depth investigations was also challenging because several programs had initially agreed to participate but later refused to allow site visits. This may be due to company secrecies and labor union involvements. Many companies were hesitant to share information about their workforce as their employees might have been underskilled and undereducated in comparison to employees at other businesses. A further challenge was that formal interviews with ESL learners were prohibited.

Summary

The discussion of findings has provided a general description of the instructional and administrative practices of ESL workplace literacy programs. Some of the most significant generalizations are:

1. Programs are relatively new and rare as most have existed for 5 years or less.
2. Companies provide about 60% of funding.
3. Outside providers are contracted to develop ESL workplace instruction.
4. Program goals vary according to corporate goals.
5. A functional context approach using learner-centered and eclectic teaching typifies most programs.
6. A good deal of custom-designed instruction takes place.

However, only superficial adjustments were made for disparate ethnic groups.

7. The two most common obstacles associated with most programs are obtaining supervisory support for employee release and providing instruction for multilevel classes.

Implications for practice

The present study has implications for the practice of ESL workplace literacy programs in the Midwest as well as those found throughout our nation. As the ESL population increases in the United States, one can expect to see more and more ESL employees who lack the basic skills and communication skills needed to succeed at the workplace. Although educators are aware of ESL workers' educational difficulties, there is no consensus on how to best address their needs especially at the workplace.

Based upon this study and the research of others, this researcher suggests several recommendations for educational providers involved in such programs.

First, providers need to realize that programs must identify and address attainable work-site specific goals. There is a goodly amount of information and research in the LSP literature in how to custom-design focused language courses. LSP courses might be an effective strategy to utilize in the ESL workplace literacy programs. For example, LSP courses could include ESL for supervisors and ESL for production workers. In addition, basic ESL classes need to incorporate cross-cultural aspects including both American culture and worksite-specific cultural awareness. Cross-cultural training should be provided to native English speakers at the workplace in order to help them understand and appreciate cultural diversity. Whenever possible, co-workers, supervisors, and management should encourage ESL employees to speak in English as much as possible within and outside the workplace. One strategy which could be incorporated could entail teaming ESL employees with native English employees. These workers would be placed together in order to encourage general English communication.

Many times funding for ESL workplace literacy programs ceases because the educational facilitator cannot document improved employee performance. Thus, it is critical for providers to utilize as many tools as possible to provide evidence of successful outcomes such as improved performance, participant satisfaction, and increased productivity.

Since many of the instructors tend to be on a part-time basis, it might be difficult for these instructors to maintain their knowledge and interest in the area of ESL workplace. In order to have effective programs, providers need to select ESL instructors who are familiarized with custom-design methods for adult ESL and workplace settings.

Additional ongoing staff development needs to be offered to ESL instructors.

An additional source of information that would be useful for program providers is a national database. Such data would maintain and disseminate valuable information in regard to effective and innovative practices to help design programs and implement such procedures.

Recommendations for future research

The review of the literature indicated that there is a lack of research-based information about ESL workplace literacy programs. Brief descriptive information about these programs is somewhat available in business newsletters and program reports but, without research, it is very possible that ESL workplace literacy programs may be conducted inefficiently or inadequately.

The researcher recommends that further studies be carried out in the following areas:

1. Conduct in-depth interviews with ESL learners to determine the language needs at the workplace and the cultural barriers which might impede program participation.
2. Investigate any parallels or differences that might exist between nonnative speakers and native speaker workplace literacy programs.
3. Investigate effective means of measuring and tracking

ESL employee literacy skill progress.

4. Investigate the occurrence and characteristics of ESL workplace literacy programs at small businesses.
5. Conduct more in-depth ethnographic studies to investigate the meaning of ESL workplace literacy programs for workers on the job, at home, and in their communities.
6. Examine the role which prior (learners') schooling has had in the workplace performance.
7. Interview teachers at ESL workplace literacy programs to determine the major adjustments and demands performed in order to become better instructors.
8. Investigate the role of a second language such as Spanish at the workplace (i.e., purpose/value of L2).

Conclusions

ESL workplace literacy programs are relatively new. Although some programs are offered by employers, much research is still needed in this area. Some of the issues which are most essential in developing such programs include: the design of work-site curricula; literacy level of ESL learners; cultural background of learners; cross-cultural issues; staff development for ESL teachers. Future investigations of ESL workplace literacy programs will help program directors and teachers to provide better services to the ESL population.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A-1

INITIAL CRITERIA FOR SITE SELECTION

Site	Educational Provider	Effective	Responded
1	University	Yes	Yes
2	Private Firm	No	Yes
3	College	Yes	Yes
4	College	No	Yes
5	Private Firm	Yes	Yes
6	College	No	No
7	Private Firm	Yes	Yes
8	College	Yes	Yes
9	University	Yes	Yes
10	State Funded Institution	Yes	Yes
11	Community Based Organization	Yes	Yes
12	Community Based Organization	Yes	Yes
13	College	Yes	Yes
14	College	Yes	Yes
15	College	No	Yes
16	University	Yes	Yes
17	Private Firm	No	Yes
18	College	Yes	Yes
19	Community Based Organization	Yes	Yes
20	University	Yes	Yes
21	College	Yes	No
22	College	Yes	Yes

***Note:** All sites had an ESL presence and provided functional context literacy. "Effective" characterizes those programs that met specific features as indicated by the Illinois Literacy Resource Center (Refer to Chapter 3 for a detailed description).

APPENDIX A-2

ADDITIONAL CRITERIA FOR SITE SELECTION

Site	Multi-ethnic	Type of Business	Labor Union
1	No	Manufacturing	Yes
5	No	Manufacturing & Service	*Yes
8	Yes	Manufacturing & Service	*Yes
9	Yes	Manufacturing	No
10	Yes	Manufacturing & Service	*Yes
11	Yes	Manufacturing	*Yes
12	No	Manufacturing	No
13	Yes	Manufacturing	*Yes
14	Yes	Manufacturing	Yes
16	Yes	Manufacturing & Service	No
18	Yes	Manufacturing & Service	*Yes
19	No	Manufacturing	No
20	Yes	Manufacturing	*Yes
22	Yes	Manufacturing	*Yes

* **Note:** These educational providers indicated that half of their company sites were unionized while the other half were not.

Under the category of type of business: "Service" indicates banking and/or hospitality.

APPENDIX A-3

FEATURES OF FINAL FOUR SITES

Site	Multi-ethnic	* Size of Company Site	Type of Business	Labor Union
1	No	Mid-size	Manufacturing	Yes
9	Yes	Large	Manufacturing	No
12	No	Large	Manufacturing	No
18	Yes	Large	Manufacturing & Service	Yes

* **Note:** Size of company was defined as "Large" (if it had 500 or more employees); "Mid-size" (50 - 500 employees).

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONS FOR PHONE INTERVIEWS

Questions which will be asked to the initial contacts:

1. Are you aware of any ESL workplace literacy programs in Illinois and Indiana? If so, who is the contact person? Where are these programs located?

2. What is the major focus of the workplace literacy program?

3. Does your institution provide any services to these programs?

4. How long has the program existed?

5. When is the program offered? (During work hours or non-hours)

6. Who provides funding for these programs? (company budget, employee fees, federal funds, union, state funds, etc.)

7. Do you suggest any contacts that would be able to facilitate this investigation?

Survey Questionnaire

The following survey questions are related to current practices in workplace literacy programs. Please respond to the questions by placing a check mark beside the **one best answer** from the choices or by writing in the answer when required. Please be aware that more than one respone may be appropriate to some questions.

1. How long has your program existed? ______________________________

2. When is your program offered?

__________ During work hrs __________ During non-work hrs __________ During work & non-work hrs

3. Is your company site unionized? __________ Yes __________ No

4. There are many reasons why companies are involved in ESL literacy education. Please rate the importance of the following reasons by checking one response for each reason listed below. (Please use the scale provided on the right)

0 = Not Applicable
1 = Low Importance
2 = Moderate Importance
3 = Important
4 = High Importance

Impr. organizational productivity __________
Impr. customer relations __________
Reduce accidents/impr. safety __________
Reduce training time __________
Practice corp. responsibility __________
Incr. comm. among employees __________

Impr. response to techno. advances __________
Incr. promotability __________
Reduce losses __________
Promote well-being __________
Commitment to economic develop. __________

5. Please list any other important reasons for your company's involvement in ESL literacy education.

____

____

6. Please indicate approximately what percent of your total literacy education budget and in-kind contributions comes from the sources listed. (Should equal 100%)

Company budget ____________ %

Employee fees ____________ %

Union contribution ____________ %

Federal funds ____________ %

State funds ____________ %

Local govt. funds ____________ %

Other: ____________ %
(please specify below)

Total 100 %

____

7. From what source does your company recruit trainers for your ESL literacy program?

____________ Inside the company ____________ Outside the company ____________ Both

8. What are the 2-3 most important qualities your company looks for in hiring trainers for your ESL literacy program?

____

____

9. What type of special training is provided for your ESL literacy trainers?

____________ Pre-service ____________ In-service ____________ None ____________ Other (Please specify below):

____

10. Which statement best describes participation in your literacy program?

____________ Participation is voluntary ______________ Participation is mandatory

____________ Participation is voluntary for some employees & mandatory for others

11. Which instructional and support services are available to participants in your program?

Learning diagnosis ______________

Child care while in class______________

Educational counseling ______________

Personal counseling ______________

Transport. to & from off-site classes ______________

Books & materials for home study ______________

Computer-assisted instruction ______________

Other (please specify below): ______________

____

12. Please rate the effectiveness of the following strategies for recruiting prospective ESL program participants by checking one response for each item listed below. Use the scale provided on the right:

0 = Never Used
1 = Not Effective
2 = Somewhat Effective
3 = Quite Effective
4 = Very Effective

Employee meetings by work unit ____________
Public address announcements ____________
Counseling interviews with employees ____________
Orientation & training for employees ____________
Notices on bulletin boards ____________
Bulletins mailed to employee's home ____________
Letters/brochures mailed to employee's home ____________

Desc. of prog. in employee handbook ____________
Info. in paycheck envelope ____________
Articles in company's newsletters ____________
Special exhibits about program ____________
Info. distributed thru unions ____________
Personal contacts ____________
Referrals from other workers ____________

13. Please list any other effective strategies used to recruit prospective participants for your ESL literacy program.

____

____

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14. What incentives are offered to employees for participating in your ESL literacy program? (Check all that apply)

___________ No direct incentives

___________ Raises

___________ Release time

___________ Tuition reimbursement

___________ Potential for promotion

___________ Bonuses

___________ Company certificate of completion

___________ Other (Please specify below):

____

15. How does your program identify workers eligible for ESL instruction? (ex. supervisors identify employees)

____

____

16. Do you have a process for assessing or measuring the job related language and literacy needs of your ESL employees?

___________ No ___________ Yes, (please describe it): ______________________________

____

17. Many times ESL learners are not familiar with the American culture or the workplace culture. Do you address culture in your curriculum? If so, how is it integrated in your program?

___________ No ___________ Yes, ____

____

18. Are there any special adjustments performed in the program when the ESL population is multi-ethnic (in contrast to a single ethnic population)?

____________ No ____________ Yes, (please specify): ____

____

19. What major obstacles or problems has your company's ESL literacy program experienced?

____

____

20. Different companies judge the success of their programs in a variety of ways. Please rate the effectiveness of the following in reflecting the success of your program by checking one response for each outcome listed below. Please use the scale provided on the right:

0 = Never Used
1 = Not Effective
2 = Somewhat Effective
3 = Quite Effective
4 = Very Effective

Participant satisfaction ____________

Participant learning gains ____________

Participant on the job performance ____________

Increased productivity in the company ____________

Increased efficiency in the company ____________

Improved interpersonal relations in the company ____________

21. Please list any other indicators of program effectiveness used in your program.

____

____

22. If there are any features of your program which have not been covered above and you feel are important, please comment below.

____

____

23. Which of these approaches typifies your program? (Please check all that apply)

____________ Language experience approach

____________ Whole language approach

____________ Communicative approach

____________ Functional approach (emphasizes life skills needed in everyday life & at the workplace)

____________ Natural approach

____________ Participatory approach (emphasizes shared decision making & examines critical issues critical to learners' lives)

____________ Eclectic approach

____________ Ethnographic approach (emphasizes the socio-cultural dimensions of literacy)

____________ Other (please specify below):

____

Thank you for your help! Please return this questionnaire in the self-addressed envelope provided.

APPENDIX D-1

QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS OF ADMINISTRATORS/TEACHERS

Questions that will be addressed during interviews with administrators and teachers at ESL workplace literacy programs:

1. What is the nature of the relationship between the educational service provider and the business and/or union partner?

2. Who provides funding for these programs? (company budget, employee fees, federal funds, union, state funds, etc.)

3. What type of needs assessment and literacy task analysis was conducted prior to the development of the curriculum?

4. Do you have a process for assessing or measuring the job related language and literacy needs of your ESL employees?

5. How does the curriculum meet the needs of the specific workforce environment?

6. Do you provide worksite-specific cultural awareness? (in contrast to general background culture)

7. How does the program identify workers eligible for ESL instruction? (i.e., supervisors identify workers)

8. How many learners should be in each group? How are they assigned to groups?

9. How are participants recruited?

10. What instructional and support services are offered to the employees?

11. How are teachers recruited?

12. How do projects staff and train teachers and/or volunteers?

13. How are project outcomes evaluated?

APPENDIX E-1

IMPORTANT QUALITIES IN HIRING TRAINERS
Number of respondents: 20

EXPERIENCE

- Prior workplace teaching experience (7 resp.)
- Prior experience with adult learners (6 resp.)
- Experience in workplace training, curriculum development, and formal training in ESL (5 resp.)
- ESL classroom experience
- Background & experience
- Experience developing own materials

EDUCATION

- Professional educational background (2 resp.)
- M.A. in Linguistics
- Degree in education
- Educational background in ESL delivery

GENERAL SKILLS

- Commitment to program expectation (2 resp.)
- Quality of instructor
- Willingness to work in a factory classroom environment
- Willingness to use student-centered teaching methodology
- Willingness to attend staff development training on regular basis
- Willingness to design course (custom design)

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Ability to be flexible (5 resp.)
- Creative (2 resp.)
- Interpersonal skills (rapport, personal touch)(2 resp.)
- Sensitivity to workplace
- Ability to establish rapport
- Ability to travel (commute from company to company)
- Ability to integrate job-specifics into curriculum

APPENDIX E-2

SPECIAL TRAINING FOR TRAINERS
Number of respondents: 6

- Monthly training sponsored by the program (2 respondents)
- Training through the state's Adult Learning Resource Center
- Special training institute (every month - 8 hr. training) & teachers are trained in cross-cultural communication (100 hrs. of training required)
- Opportunity to participate in Service Center workshops conferences, etc.
- Interactive workshops every 2 months
- Self-study teacher packets and mentoring program
- Orientation discussions & tours
- Training in specific methods
- On-going staff meeting and reflection on practices
- Internship & shadowing
- Ongoing mentoring (if needed)
- Assist in task analysis and curriculum development process
- Observed by administrative staff on regular basis
- Informal talk with director before teaching

APPENDIX E-3

SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS OF TRAINERS
Number of respondents: 9

EDUCATION

- ESL/TESOL certification (2 resp.)
- B.A. or B.S. preferred; M.A. is a plus
- M.A. in Linguistics (not required but preferred)
- M.A. in related field
- M.A. in ESL
- Demonstrated ability to provide a successful program & state certification for teaching in a related area (not a specific one)

EXPERIENCE

- 2/3 yrs. teaching experience preferably with adults/ESL learners (4 resp.)
- Experience in workplace training; curriculum development; and formal training in ESL (3 resp.)
- Prior teaching experience (2 resp.)
- Elementary education teaching experience is best as they can utilize their elementary education skills in multi-level classes
- Foreign language teaching experience
- Diverse experience, Peace Corps experience

SKILLS

- Creative, flexible & committed instructors, willing to attend regular training, interact with peers, & work as a team with peers, administrators & workers to ensure a quality, student-centered, work-based curriculum which respects the fact that the program is in part sponsored by a labor union
- Creative, flexible, caring personalities (responsive)
- Interpersonal skills
- Innovative
- Ability to travel (commute from company to company)
- Recommendation from a colleague is an advantage
- Completion of 3 workshops in adult ESL/basic skills
- Informal interview w/teachers (no background experience needed)
- Graduated Delegation Model (newer person teamed with experienced teacher- after 12 weeks (max.) teacher develops own course)

APPENDIX E-4

INSTRUCTIONAL & SUPPORT SERVICES
Number of respondents: 3

- Access to programs offered through the community college networks
- Tutoring to catch up to level of available group classes, when needed
- Transportation stipend
- Child care stipend

APPENDIX E-5

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS

Number of respondents: 10

- "Word of mouth" by other satisfied students (2 resp.)
- Steering committee for planning (advisory committee) (2 resp.)
- Mandatory attendance in program on company time or on paid time
- Peer promotions
- Town meeting (all company employees are brought together and a presentation is made by the educational provider staff)
- Typing or keyboarding workshops as an introduction to the learning center's services
- Company trainer informs supervisors of new ESL class start date and requests referrals
- Presentations by human resources & supervisors at union & staff meetings
- Mandatory participation on work time

APPENDIX E-6

INCENTIVES OFFERED TO EMPLOYEES
Number of respondents: 4

- Payment for one-half of personal time in class, given in pay or time off after successful course completion (2 prog. dir)
- Recognition ceremony where certificates of completion and a special meal are provided
- Feature workers and the program in company's newsletter
- Self-improvement for wanting to learn
- Sponsored party & small token gifts
- Refreshments & snacks
- Gift certificates for ethnic restaurants
- Air conditioning room

APPENDIX E-7

IDENTIFY WORKERS ELIGIBLE FOR ESL INSTRUCTION
Number of respondents: 20

- Supervisors identify employees (10 respondents)
- Self-identify and register for classes (8 respond.)
- Assessments company-wide of all production employees (7 respondents) (i.e., use CELSA and/or A-LAS)
- Human resources targets employees (4 prog. direct)
- Co-identification of eligibility through union and company management based on workers' seniority
- Steering committee
- Pilot class where volunteered and assessed
- All limited English speaking employees are tested (those with greatest need are offered training first)
- Employees in units (assembly division) are assessed
- Personal interviews

APPENDIX E-8

MAJOR OBSTACLES/PROBLEMS WITH PROGRAM
Number of respondents: 20

- Problems releasing employees from their jobs to attend class (6 respondents)
- Multi-level classes (6 resp.)
- Family & personal time constraints (i.e., second jobs, day care issues) (5 resp.)
- Transportation (many workers live in the city and van pool to worksites in the suburbs) (4 resp.)
- Long term ongoing funding (4 resp.)
- Fitting class time into work schedules (3 resp.)
- Supervisor's cooperation (buy-in) (2 resp.)
- Getting company commitment commensurate with the level of remediation that is needed (company buy-in) (2 resp.)
- Changes in shift schedules cause attrition
- Company has low expectation or standards of attendance
- Communication (no advisory board - after 2 yrs., instructors just now received permission to take company tour due to concerns of trade secrets)
- Fear of retaliation/need for confidentiality of test results
- Union involvement
- Instructor's lack of what the business is like (in tune with the company)
- Male teachers are a viewed negatively by some cultures
- Length of time it takes to learn a language
- Challenge of reinforcing the language on the job
- Extreme diversity of employee backgrounds & needs

APPENDIX E-9

ASSESSING/MEASURING JOB RELATED LANGUAGE AND LITERACY NEEDS
Number of respondents: 17

- Educational provider conducts a needs assessment, job analysis and task analysis. Instructors observe workers at their jobs & talk with supervisors about workplace documents and common communication problems that arise (to determine lang. and literacy needs - modified literacy audit) (6 resp.)

- Supervisor's evaluation (2 resp.) (i.e., Students given assignments that require interaction w/supervisors - supervisors give subjective response)

- Oral BEST and written BEST test for non-native English speakers (for native speakers TABE test) (2 resp.)

- Oral interview about the job and workplace (2 resp.)

- Customized discrete point (reading & oral) assessments that measure job specific knowledge (2 resp.)

- Educational provider tests employees

- BEST oral test (short form) and TABE math computation (level M), CELSA, completion of personal information form during oral interview (when BEST is administered if necessary)

- CELSA or A-LAS (Adult-Language Assessment Scales) to determine current abilities, along with personal interviews

- A-LAS & list of competencies addressing personal identification (signs, phrases, tools, safety, machines)

- Administer tests either in native language literacy or basic English

- BEST used as a placement tool

- SORT, TABE and/or CELSA

- TABE (reading comprehension), BEST (one-on-one), and employer assessment data sheet (i.e., formal education -in native lang., how well do you read manuals in English, name, date, company, address)

- Test-piloting a workplace test designed by program

(results are confidential)

- An established curriculum is used broken down into 8 levels

- Curriculum based measures

- Employee self-evaluation

Acronyms:

A-LAS: Adult-Language Assessment Scales
BEST: Basic English Skills Test
CELSA: Combined English Language Skills in a Reading Context
SORT: Slosson Oral Reading Test
TABE: Test of Adult Basic Education

APPENDIX E-10

WAY CULTURE IS ADDRESSED IN CURRICULUM
Number of respondents: 18

- Informally as brought up by class (i.e., Appropriate reasons for arriving late for work and an orientation for job requirements such as lunch, breaks, W-2 forms, explanation of paychecks and taxes, informal vs. formal greetings, "excuse me, I don't understand") (6 resp.)
- Cultural issues are integrated into the regular job-specific curriculum (i.e., reporting absences, timeliness, eye contact, business practices, expectations, etc.) (5 resp.)
  (i.e., Buchanan running for presidential nominee - how immigration might change)
- Use "life skills" lessons (finding locations in community, banking, holidays) to connect into related work skills (like finding locations in the factory) (2 resp.)
- Informallly through role-plays & discussions as culture relates to the competency being taught (i.e., bringing realia/artifacts from their cultures - foods, festivals are scheduled as extra-curricular activities) (2 resp.)
- To a limited extent (Holidays & customs are addressed and accepted behaviors in workplace and in community.)
- Job/career preparedness as part of tutorial classes
- Culture isn't addressed but supervisors may require cultural diversity training
- Instructors are mentored as to what to introduce by coordinator or by manager

APPENDIX E-11

SPECIAL ADJUSTMENTS FOR MULTI-ETHNIC

Number of respondents: 9

- Instructor in Hispanic only classes sometimes will use Spanish if s/he know it to help explain English

- Extra in-class or tutoring assistance may be available in multi-ethnic class (Asians particularly need help in pronunciation which is not so difficult for Spanish speakers)

- Instruction is individualized to meet the specific learning need of the adults

- Identify cultural issues as they relate to other students & workplace

- Lessons elicit information on their home cultures

- An aide is bilingual for help

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APPENDIX E-12

INDICATORS OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS
Number of respondents: 10

EVALUATIONS:

- Surveys administered to workers, supervisors, management and union personnel of participating company
- Results of supervisor's survey with their observations of students
- Supervisor's evaluation of each employee's language-related ability (a pre/post evaluation comparison tool
- Students' evaluation results
- IL funded programs measure effectiveness (wrongly based on standardized test scores. Other measures include performance on criterion-referenced tests.
- Occasional use of post-tests
- By projects as participants decide what they will do. (i.e., A competency level III class wrote a play; another group rewrote the company's policies to how they would like them to be)

SELF-IMPROVEMENT:

- Morale
- Students come to talk to you
- Students share their ideas with others
- Self-reported improvements in personal skills such as helping children with homework and understanding credit cards
- Students communicate helpfulness of class to other employees
- Enrolled in a third term

IMPROVED COMPANY PERFORMANCE:

- Reduced tardiness (2 resp.)
- Reduced absenteeism (2 resp.)
- Economic value added by the training program
- Increased application for promotion
- Reduced scrap
- Mastery of identified learning objectives

APPENDIX E-13

APPROACHES THAT TYPIFY YOUR PROGRAM
Number of respondents: 4

- Eclectic approach using all the approaches (training in all approaches is provided for teachers)
- 1:1/1:5 prescriptive tutorial model based on a mastery learning, PSI curriculum script
- Emphasis varies according to preferences/goals of particular classes.
- Competency-based
- Multiple intelligences
- Feuerstein's Instrumental enrichment & mediated learning

APPENDIX E-14

FEATURES NOT COVERED

Number of respondents: 5

- "Program is effective because it attempts to integrate all stakeholder at all levels of the program operations. Exemplary practices include advisory boards, including all stakeholder (workers, union, mgmt, and university program facilitator and administrators) which steer program direction, an innovative staff development model and provision of ESL and basic skills literacy classes to union workers utilizing interactive and work-based learning materials and methodologies which increase workers' ability to be promoted at their jobs and enhance workers' personal needs as well."
- "Workplace programs require flexibility depending upon company's goals and upon the characteristics of the participants."
- "Company needs to be very involved"
- Value responsiveness
- "There is an effort to keep communication open all the time. If a student voices objections or requests, we attempt to discuss it and adjust quickly if it's appropriate."
- Competency check list
- Graduated Delegation Staff-development model
- A 3 yr. strategic development plan w/company
- Establish partnership; job-task analysis (& safety task); context of workplace reflective in curriculum; teachers in tune w/your philosophy; project management to help resolve problems with company & facilitate teachers; develop own text with specific curriculum to the context

APPENDIX F

CHECKLIST FOR DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

I. Highlights of program outcomes

  1. Participant accomplishments
  2. Partner company accomplishments

II. Program objectives

  1. Accomplishment of objectives

III. Profile of program participants

IV. Program activities

  1. Description of classes
  2. Support services
  3. Profile of program staff
  4. Educational methodology
  5. Teacher selection
  6. Staff development
  7. Teaching materials - linked to workplace?
  8. Teacher evaluation

V. Program implementation

  1. Task analysis
  2. Curriculum development
  3. Assessment process
  4. Class implementation
  5. Participant identification
  6. Participant recruitment